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AS PARTIAL FEDERAL SHUTDOWN DRAGS ON

District Court funding lapses Friday

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Mangloña said the U.S. Judiciary has managed to find sufficient funds to have the District Court operating until this Friday as the partial federal government shutdown continues.

Mangloña

"It is unfortunate that we are in a shutdown," said Mangloña in an interview at the inauguration ceremony for Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios Monday at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

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DPS: Burglaries continue to subside

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The number of burglaries on Saipan after Super Typhoon Yutu continues to subside following the arrest of three unidentified suspects, according to the Department of Public Safety.

During the inauguration ceremony last Monday, DPS Commissioner Robert Guerrero told the media that burglaries started to die down following the arrest of the three individuals.

"Fortunately, there hasn't been much activity going on out there…

See DPS on **Page 4**

Guam, Palau renew closer ties with NMI

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Hundreds of miles of water may separate the CNMI from its Micronesian island neighbors, but Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and Republic of Palau President Tommy Remengesau said they are always ready to help their brothers and sisters in the region. Both leaders were among those that attended last Monday's inauguration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios that also included Federated States of Micronesia President Peter M. Christian and members of the FSM and Guam legislatures.

Leon Guerrero, before returning

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JON PEREZ
Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero joins Guam Power Authority personnel in a group photo yesterday after visiting them at their work site at the William S. Reyes Elementary School in Chalan Kanoa.

INSIDE

BUSINESS
A Chinese court sentenced a Canadian man to death in a sudden retrial of a drug smuggling case and Beijing said that it has denied a Canadian diplomatic immunity.
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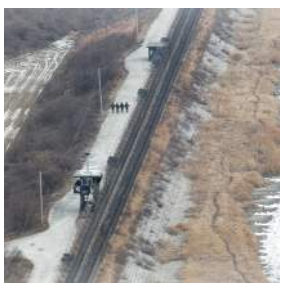

ASIA
South Korea stopped calling North Korea an "enemy" in its biennial defense document published Tuesday, an apparent effort to continue reconciliation with Pyongyang.
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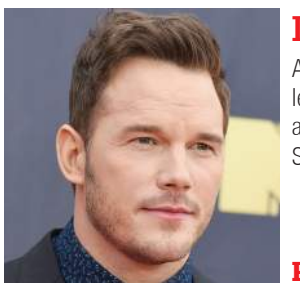

LIFE & STYLE
A whirlwind romance is leading to an engagement for actor Chris Pratt and Katherine Schwarzenegger.
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Local

BOE: GES also up for relocation

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Board of Education yesterday said it plans to relocate the Garapan Elementary School and to similarly set up the Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood Middle School Campus in such a way that both double as temporary typhoon shelters.

In an interview yesterday, BOE chair Janice Tenorio noted that plans for the relocation of GES and the new Hopwood campus included discussions with the Governor's Office to construct classrooms in a way that allows it to withstand typhoons.

"We look forward to work with the governor and the Legislative branch to relocating… and rebuilding Hopwood," she said. Tenorio noted that they plan to move the middle school along with GES to a less busy area of Saipan.

"…Relocating the schools to enhance [them] into a modern facilities for our students is our main goal. That is one of the reason why we want to move it—to have a more secure and modern school and moving it away from…[businesses]," she said, referring to the busy streets of Garapan and the exiting area immediately at Hopwood.

ERWIN ENCINARES

The Board of Education yesterday convening in their office on Capitol Hill.

» Hopwood campus to double as typhoon shelter

Tenorio recognized that the Hopwood campus had sustained extensive damage due to Super Typhoon Yutu in late October 2018.

"[We want to] harden the facilities and the infrastructures of the PSS," she said. "We will work with the governor and the Legislature to harden the structure and the facility," she said.

"These are good, healthy discussions for our future. Not only that, this is good timing because we are rebuilding," she continued.

Hopwood principal Dr. Rizalina Liwag told *Saipan Tribune* in a previous interview that all of its 10 buildings on campus sustained "major damage," affecting about 70 rooms in all.

Right now, Hopwood is holding classes in the morning at the Marianas High School campus, but Education Commissioner Glenn Muña noted that they would soon be moving to a new campus near the Koblerville Elementary School once the 42 temporary classrooms are completed.

Muña previously reported to the BOE that subcontractors for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working 24 hours a day to complete the temporary structures before February.

"We are expecting to move the students of Hopwood to their new temporary campus…in the first or second week of February [2019]," he told the Board of Education's Fiscal, Personnel, and Administrative Committee during a meeting on Jan. 8, 2019.

"I am looking forward to collaborating with everybody, my colleagues in the board, the commissioner, the legislative branch, and the private sector," said Tenorio yesterday, who was elected yesterday as chair for the 16th BOE unanimously.

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TO ATTEND SISTER'S FUNERAL

Mayor Atalig seeks court's permission to travel to Guam

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig requested yesterday the federal court to allow him to travel again to Guam, this time to attend the funeral of his sister.

Atalig, through counsel David G. Banes, said his sister, Bernadita Atalig Lingad, recently died and that her funeral will be this Monday, Jan. 21, in Guam.

Banes said if allowed, the mayor plans to depart this Sunday, Jan. 20, and return to Rota on Tuesday, Jan. 22.

Banes said counsel for the U.S. government has indicated that he would not oppose allowing Atalig to travel to Guam to attend the funeral.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona recently granted the request of Atalig to travel to Guam to attend the general assembly of the Association of Mariana Islands Mayors, Vice Mayors and Elected Municipal Council Members.

Atalig was given permission to travel to Guam last Jan. 8 to 10 to attend the 25th AMIM General Assembly.

In Atalig's unopposed motion for permission to travel, Banes, said his client is a member of AMIM.

The U.S. government did not oppose the request.

Last September, a federal grand jury indicted Atalig after he allegedly arranged a government-funded trip from Rota to Guam for himself and 12 other persons, including eight municipal employees, on a false claim that he was going to check for surplus or equipment at the Naval Base in Guam. Actually, he allegedly came to participate in a partisan political rally last June 23 in Mangilao.

The indictment charged Atalig with one count of wire fraud.

The Office of the Attorney General also filed on the same day criminal charges in Superior Court against Atalig and seven others Rota municipal officials in connection with the Guam political rally.

Atalig was re-elected as Rota m,ayor during the last Nov. 13 election.

Last Nov. 28, the U.S. government filed a superseding indictment in federal court charging mayor Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn M. Atalig, with five corruption charges for allegedly arranging CNMI government-funded trips to California, Republic of Palau, Guam, and Saipan under fraudulent pretenses.

The superseding indictment charged mayor Atalig and Ms. Atalig with conspiracy, wire fraud, theft from program receiving federal funds, and two counts of false statements.

The Ataligs pleaded not guilty in both cases.

Real ID system to launch this year

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Guerrero

The Real ID System that aims to unify the systems of various government and local agencies in the CNMI is expected to launch this year.

In interview with Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero, he said the Real ID System has been in the works for a while and is nearly ready to be fully implemented in a few months.

"We're ready to actually launch the issues of those IDs but full compliance is within the next three to four months," he said.

Although the system is ready to be launched, Guerrero said that they would have to link systems with the American Motor Vehicle Association in order to have it fully operational nationwide.

"It requires a link with the American Motor Vehicle Association, it's going to be nationwide…" he said.

Guerrero explained that the purpose for the IDs that will be issued from the Real ID System is to allow travel between any of the U.S. territories with the use of just one identification card.

"I know the Real ID System is going to link all of our systems to the Homeland Security system, the passport system, CBP, TSA, the hospital. It will comprise of everything so it's going to be a little bit harder to get a driver's license because all the systems are going to be linked to all those agencies… Once you get that, you can travel to any U.S. territory just using your ID," he said.

Aside from the Real ID System, DPS aims to push forward with e-ticketing system soon, after issues are solved.

"There was an issue with the e-ticketing and my position was always if we're going to implement e-ticketing, it has to be across the board without patrol vehicles. it cannot be just traffic and print, it has to be across the board. We cannot be issuing e-tickets on one side and paper tickets on the other," he said.

Honolulu city attorney targeted in federal corruption probe

HONOLULU (AP)—The city of Honolulu's chief legal officer has received a target letter linked to an ongoing federal corruption investigation.

Mayor Kirk Caldwell says Corporation Counsel Donna Leong is taking a paid leave of absence, effective Monday.

The grand jury investigation has already resulted in corruption-related charges against a retired Honolulu police chief and his wife, a former deputy prosecutor. Prosecutors say the couple framed an uncle for stealing their mailbox.

Caldwell says Leong's letter from the FBI has to do with the separation agreement she negotiated when Chief Louis Kealoha retired after receiving a target letter. Leong's attorney didn't immediately return a call seeking comment.

Last month, Chasid Sapolu, Honolulu's second-highest-ranking prosecutor, announced a leave of absence after receiving a subject letter, which is less serious than a target letter.

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Torres admin eyes harmonious relationship with Legislature

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is looking forward to working closely with the Legislative branch, especially with the Republican Party keeping the majority both in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The local GOP holds 12 of the 20 seats in the House and six of the nine in the Senate.

Newly appointed chief of staff Angel A. Demapan said the administration is looking at longterm solutions aside from the continuing recovery efforts of the islands of Saipan and Tinian from the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu.

"Obviously, is to continue the progress we've made. The primary goal is to stabilize the economy and address the workforce issues that we have," said Demapan in yesterday's interview when he accompanied Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero in visiting Guam Power Authority personnel who were assisting in power restoration on Saipan.

The CNMI economy took a direct hit in what Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios called the 1-2 punch of Typhoon Mangkhut on Rota and Super Typhoon Yutu on the islands of Saipan and Tinian last October. For almost a month, tourism—the CNMI economy's major industry—was at a standstill.

JON PEREZ

Angel A. Demapan, right, takes on the role of being the new chief of staff of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in the next four years.

Labor issues also continue to hound the CNMI as it needs a permanent solution to its lack of skilled workforce before the CW-1 program ends in 2029. The CNMI is also waiting for a legislative fix in the separate issue of those workers under the humanitarian parole program.

Demapan said that this is what they are hoping to capitalize on with the Executive and Legislative branches both under the local GOP. "The ultimate goal will be for longterm solutions; that's the important thing to do."

"Now, with the GOP leadership in the Legislature, we are looking forward of taking advantage of that. To be able to work harmoniously with the Legislative branch and to ensure the administration's platform and promises for continued progress is carried forward."

The Republicans originally grabbed 13 of the 20 House seats with Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz of Precinct 3, who unexpectedly died last Jan. 6. House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) said they are drafting a letter to declare a vacant seat.

The letter will then be sent to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to inform of the Executive branch of the vacancy at the House with the former calling for a special election in 30 days.

Demapan said that helping in the daily operations at the Governor's Office will be one of his goals aside from keeping the mission and objective of the administration on track. "I'm happy to be of assistance to this administration."

"We've seen a lot of progress, but we also have a lot of plans that the governor and lt. governor wanted to undertake. I'm very excited to be part of this team and to help continue moving the Commonwealth forward."

Demapan, who lost to Delegate Gergorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) in the last elections, said that Torres and Palacios will be deciding on the composition of their Cabinet as soon as they finish reviewing the reports compiled and submitted by the transition committee. "They will be making assessments and upon completion of the review, they will be able to decide the composition of the Cabinet."

He added that Torres and Palacios has not set a timeframe on how long it would take them to decide who would stay from the current Cabinet or who would be let go.

Demapan was also asked if the ongoing federal government shutdown would affect federallyfunded programs here in the CNMI. "[All] federally funded programs in the CNMI will continue to be operable.

"We just hope that they (U.S. federal government and Congress) can bring resolution to that [shutdown]. Because we don't know at this point whether a prolong shutdown will eventually affect the operations here on the federal side."

He added that, as of this time, they see no problems with the funds provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for typhoon recovery efforts and the Nutrition Assistance Program.

DISTRICT

From Page 1

The judge said after this Friday, they will be getting guidance from their administrative office.

"Friday, 18th we're funded, after that we're not funded like the Executive Branch," Mangloña said.

She said it is the same situation with the U.S. District Court for Guam.

U.S. District Court for Guam Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood was with Manglona at the inauguration ceremony.

Even with the shutdown, the federal court, however, will not be closed because of the constitutional rights issue.

Mangloña said they are looking forward to an appropriation soon.

The federal government partial shutdown is currently plaguing the U.S. mainland. It was reported last Monday that about 800,000 federal government workers missed paychecks last Friday.

Proceedings in at least two civil cases against the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and co-defendants filed in federal court have also been delayed in light of the federal government shutdown.

Mangloña recently granted DHS' and co-defendants' unopposed motion to stay proceedings in light of lapse of appropriations in the two lawsuits.

In a motion to stay proceedings in the two cases, assistant U.S. attorney Jessica F. Wessling, counsel for DHS and co-defendants, said at the end of the day last Dec. 21, the appropriations act that had been funding the Department of Justice expired and appropriations to the department lapsed.

Wessling said the same is true for several other Executive agencies, including the DHS.

She said DOJ does not know when funding will be restored by Congress.

Wessling said the Anti-Deficiency Act as construed by the Attorney General, provides that "in the absence of appropriated funds no obligation can be incurred except for the protection of life and property, the orderly suspension of operations, or as otherwise authorized by law."

She said absent an appropriation, DOJ attorneys and employees of the federal DHS are prohibited from working, even on a voluntary basis, except in very limited circumstances, including "emergencies involving the safety of human life or the protection of property."

DPS

From Page 1

burglaries have started to slow down, we've managed to catch the [perpetrators]…so hopefully that's all there is to it," he said.

According to Guerrero, about a month following Super Typhoon Yutu, the department was receiving one to two reports or burglaries or attempted burglaries every night.

Guerrero did not disclose the name of the individual the DPS believes is responsible for at least 11 of the reported burglaries following Super Typhoon Yutu.

"We haven't had that much burglaries lately compared to that whole month that there were burglaries almost every day. We've caught three or more people that we believe are responsible for all of it, for 11 of them at least…it was a ring of three people…we caught them with some of the stuff that were stolen," he said.

Guerrero said he did not have an estimate, at the moment, of how many reported burglaries the department has looked into since Yutu.

Guerrero is hopeful that the pattern in burglaries continues to die down so that everyone can continue to move forward.

"We've had theft here and there, mostly inside issues but burglaries have died down…there's not that much and hopefully it stays that way…for now, we have to move forward from here," he said.

The most recent reported burglary incident was the burglary of popular floral arrangement shop Island Touch by Philip.

According to a public Facebook post made by shop owner and manager Philip Canuto, his store located across the Saipan Community School in Susupe was broken into and was burglarized.

Canuto allegedly lost many of his personnel belongings.

GUAM

From Page 1

to Guam yesterday, visited personnel from the Guam Power Authority who are working to restore the power at the William S. Reyes Elementary School in Chalan Kanoa. She met with about 30 GPA linemen during their brief break at their work site at the school, one of the areas that were hit hardest by Super Typhoon Yutu last October.

She said that Torres, during their short meeting, said the progress of the islands' recovery are going very well with power on Saipan almost complete. "Two months after the typhoon, [power on Saipan] are already between 85 to 90 percent hooked up. I think that there's a lot of very aggressive [efforts] that's being done. I know that you also worked closely with the [CNMI]. I am so proud with you guys that are here."

"It is just a good humanitarian service that we are doing, together with the CNMI family. The governor [Torres], in his inaugural address yesterday, recognized [GPA]. He gave you a lot of commendation. You make Guam really proud on the sacrifice that you've made. We are very appreciative of the partnership that we're doing."

She added that GPA helping restore power on Saipan is the purpose of the brotherhood and sisterhood between Guam and the CNMI. "I tell you, when you came off the airplane and these bucket trucks are rolling out, there was a great relief from the people of the CNMI. We saw it in Guam too. I was very appreciative of all the things that you've done."

"When we experienced a typhoon and we ourselves were also without power and water, we also had help from the Mariana Islands. We need to always feel that bond from the people here, no one else can do it except ourselves. I know your families are missing you, but we're almost done."

Leon Guerrero, a five-term senator in the Guam Legislature before being elected as the island's first female chief executive, said that Torres would do the same if ever Guam is in a similar situation.

"That's the kind of bond and partnership that we need to have in this part of the world, no one else can do it except ourselves. I wanted to take the time out to see you and thank you so much for all the help in trying to make the people's lives here much better."

"Like I said, it is something that we need to do; show our friendship. That we're all one in culture and one people. We have commonalities and we have to always work together for the improvement of all our people's lives. One, very great demonstration of that philosophy is something that I truly hold dear to my heart: that no one else can do it except ourselves here, we need to combine forces as best as we can."

One people, one community

Remengesau, who served as Palau's head of state from 2001 to 2009, said that they are wishing for the CNMI's full recovery from the devastation brought by Yutu. "I appreciate the message of his [Torres] speech. It is about family and community spirit, especially after going through such a disaster. Already, you can see the feeling of camaraderie and working together."

"I think, that is true throughout the [Micronesian] islands. We always come together as one people and one community whenever we are faced with a common tragedy or disaster or challenge. That is the beauty of the island culture. They [Torres and Palacios] expressed that it is all about family, our culture, our values, and moving forward in every disaster."

He added that camaraderie between the island neighbors in the region has always been practiced. "We've always been brothers and sisters. We've always been supportive of one another. As I've always said, what's good for one island is good for all of us. We need to root for one another. Of course, more than ever, the best leadership is partnership."

Remengesau said that the load is lighter if they take on it as one region. "You can do better. Take the load much better if you put it on your shoulder as one region. Sharing ideas, resources, good experiences, and the things that work. What works here will also work for either Palau, Guam, FSM, the Marshall Islands, and the entire region. That's the spirit that we are excited to continue to share."

Ex-foreign workers of defunct Tinian Dynasty move for default judgment

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Former foreign workers of the defunct Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino filed last Friday a motion for the federal court to enter a default judgment against the owners and management of Tinian Dynasty.

Samuel Mok, counsel for Eric F. Dona and co-plaintiffs, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to enter the default judgment against Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investments Ltd., owner of Tinian Dynasty, and its management, Mega Stars Overseas Limited.

Mok is counsel for Dona and six other co-plaintiffs. There are 15 named plaintiffs in this case.

Mok said that, last Aug. 13, the District Court issued an order striking the answers of HKE and Mega Stars and entering default against each of the defendants as a result of their failure to retain legal counsel despite being given ample opportunity to do so.

Mok said his clients' claims for damages are not for a sum certain or a sum that can be calculated by the court's clerk.

"Accordingly, an evidentiary hearing is requested before final judgment is entered against the defendants," the lawyer said.

Mok filed the motion for default judgment after U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona recently ordered the plaintiffs to explain why their lawsuit should not be dismissed for failure to prosecute.

In an order to show cause, Manglona said that last Aug. 14, court's clerk entered a default of HKE and Mega Stars Overseas Ltd.

The judge said more than four months have passed and plaintiffs have not applied to the court for a default judgment, or taken any action in this case.

Last August, U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood adopted Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy's recommendation to direct the clerk to enter a default judgment against HKE and Mega Stars.

Tydingco-Gatewood granted the workers' motion to strike the answers of HKE and Mega Stars.

Kennedy in her recommendation stated that it is well established that "a corporation may appear in the federal courts only through licensed counsel."

In this case, Kennedy said, the court informed defendants on multiple occasions after the withdrawal of their lawyers both in 2016 and 2018, that they may face sanctions, including stricken answers and a default judgment, if they failed to obtain counsel.

"Yet no counsel has appeared to represent defendants since Jan. 16, 2018 when defendants' second counsel was permitted to withdraw from the case," Kennedy said.

In their lawsuit, Dona and co-plaintiffs alleged that HKE and Mega Stars lied to them about their immigration legal status.

Mok alleged that the owners and management of Tinian Dynasty lied that the workers were legally authorized to work notwithstanding the denial of their CW-1 petitions.

In February 2018, Chun Wai Chan, a corporate representative of both HKE and Mega Stars, disclosed that the total outstanding liabilities of the owner of Tinian Dynasty has now climbed to over $250 million, excluding the $75 million in civil penalty assessed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

Chan said Tinian Dynasty's casino operation stopped in August 2015, and when the hotel operation halted in March 2016 no more income could be generated since then.

Tenorio is new BOE chair

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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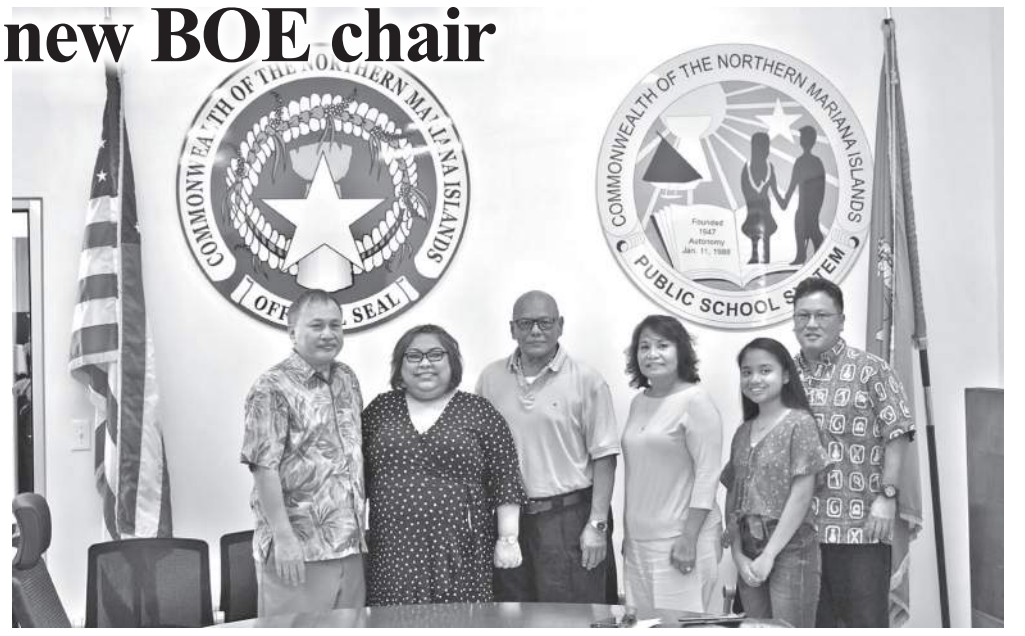
REPORTER



ERWIN ENCINARES

New Board of Education chair Janice Tenorio, second left, poses with the 16th BOE members after their special session yesterday.

The Board of Education unanimously voted yesterday to elect Janice Tenorio as its new board chairwoman.

Without meeting opposition, BOE members Herman Atalig, Marylou Ada, and Andrew Orsini voted in support of assigning Tenorio as the 16th BOE chairwoman.

They voted Atalig as BOE vice chair while Ada was voted as BOE secretary/treasurer. It's Tenorio's first time to be elected chairwoman of BOE.

"This is my last two years [in the BOE] and my colleagues believe that I should lead the BOE [for the last two years]," Tenorio said in an interview.

"I expect full cooperation," said Tenorio. "I believe I work well with everybody, empowering them, meeting with them, and just updating with them. Communication, I believe, is a strong key," she added.

Tenorio's projects include the pay raise scheme for highly qualified teachers in the Public School System. She also spearheaded the reconstruction of several bus shelters throughout the island.

"My biggest [goal] is to really work together with the board and to make a difference in my last two years and I hope they would support me," she said. In terms of future projects, Tenorio noted that she has yet to decide on a specific project the board should pursue but is all ears for ideas.

"The commissioner has a lot of ideas in regards to [new] projects. We have faith in him in regards to programs, projects, and ideas, and we want to support that because he is in the frontline," she said.

Ada nominated Tenorio for the position, while Orsini expressed concern over the representation of Tinian prior to selecting a chairwoman for the board. Orsini attempted to dive the board into executive session before they discussed Tenorio's nomination for BOE chairwoman, however none of the board members seconded his motion, while Atalig seconded Ada's motion to nominate Tenorio.

Orsini was concerned that the BOE currently is lacking one representative at the board for Tinian due to the fact that former BOE Tinian representative Florine Hofschneider's decided not to seek reelection. Currently, only Saipan and Rota are represented on the BOE.

"…Doing the selection [of BOE chair] now and then having somebody come in [for Tinian representation] I am thinking that for all fairness we would like to have that board member [in the board] before we continue with the selection of officers," he told BOE chair pro tem and legal counsel Tiberius Mocanu in a statement after Ada nominated Tenorio.

"…I stand clear that I believe we should…wait until we get the member in from Tinian," he said.

Mocanu explained to the BOE that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has the authority to appoint a Tinian resident into the BOE once a slot has been opened. He opines that the slot had only been open since yesterday, since the 16th BOE officially came into existence after the oath-taking of Orsini.

"We do not have officers right now for the BOE and there are documents that needs to signed by the BOE chair," Ada said, addressing Mocanu. She noted that the established quorum of four voting members out of five was sufficient to select the chair since there were important documents that needed signing by the BOE chair.

Ultimately, the BOE did not go into executive session yesterday and proceeded to select their officers.

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Senate snubs legal issues, passes NMTI bill

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate in last Friday's sine die session passed Senate Bill 20-106, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1 despite CNMI Attorney General Edward Manibusan and Senate legal counsel Jose Bermudes recommending to first address the legal implications of the said legislation. All eight senators, minus Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota), voted in the affirmative.

Manibusan, in a letter sent to House Judiciary and Governmental Affairs Committee chair Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan), said S.B. 20-106—although there are some differences with House Bill 20-181—would not affect the legal analysis he presented in another letter.

Sen. Justo S. Quitugua (Ind-Saipan) introduced S.B. 20-106 or an act that would establish a Northern Marianas Technical Institute by adding a new Chapter 12 to Title 3, Division 1 of the Commonwealth Code while Rep. Edwin P. Aldan (R-Tinian) authored H.B. 20-181 that aims to establish NMTI as a government entity.

Manibusan cited Article XV Section 2 (b) of the CNMI Constitution adding that both bills are a flawed plan of "converting NMTI into an independent public agency with duties and responsibilities that fall within the constitutional mandate of the Northern Marianas College."

Article XV, Section 2 (b) states: The purpose of [NMC] shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful post-secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the [CNMI] as a whole. [NMC] shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, postsecondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the [CNMI]. The Board of Regents shall establish the mission statement of [NMC]."

"[S.B. 20-106] proposes to confer on NMTI the authority to provide services and programs to high school students, thereby encroaching on the constitutional domain of the public education system under the authority of the [CNMI State] Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education," said Manibusan.

"Also problematic is the conversion of NMTI from a private entity into a public agency. As a private entity, NMTI is required to windup its affairs and transfer its assets in accordance with dissolution proceedings for non-profit organizations."

His recommendation was to first address the problems. "[S.B. 20-106] contemplates a conversion and transfer provisions that may contradict statues and regulations governing non-profit organizations. I recommend that the Committee fully address the foregoing legal issues before sending it to the House floor for disposition."

Bermudes said he and Senate senior legal counsel Antonette Villagomez reviewed and discussed the AG's letter as it raised three things: NMC's mandate under Article 15, Section 2 (b); the possible encroachment to PSS and the educational system; and a non-profit corporation that's going to be converted to a public entity.

"There may be ways to fix it but the very first concern is the mandate of NMC is problematic. When this bill was first introduced, the first draft, that issue was always been brought up. From the beginning and up to this point, absent a constitutional amendment, I have advised that this issue was not addressed in the current bill," said Bermudes.

"It is my opinion, that absent the constitutional amendment to fix that portion, the NMC mandate on adult education; unless the language is change and allows another entity to co-exist and have similar or identical, or differences on trades and vocational program. My advice is the bill's amendment does not satisfy the first issue raised by the AG. I rendered decisions in the past and members had voted just the opposite."

Quitugua said that they had redrafted the bill after it was first introduced in the 19th Legislature removing the words vocational education with NMC and Public School System officials also providing their comments on the said legislation.

"When we redrafted, we sent it to the House removing anything in reference to vocational education. When it got to the governor, the governor vetoed it but the AG did not put anything in the veto message saying the unconstitutionality of the bill. The [language] vocational education was no longer there. We changed it and made it a training center for trades and technical."

"We added a transition period to make sure that NMTI, if it becomes public entity, just not change hands tomorrow or overnight; it would have a six-month transition period for the governor to work with new board and the existing board to move everything on the third part said by AG; moving from non-pro to government."

He added that the recent version of the bill is not different from the one that was vetoed by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. "The words vocational education was not there and it was to become a training center for trades and technical. This is a competition of funding."

"For me, I don't see anything that will prevent our people from getting the training that PSS and NMC cannot provide. It is our responsibility here in the Senate that other ways and opportunities must be provided to our people so they can receive training.

Quitugua said the extension of the CW-1 or CNMI-Only Worker Transition program to another 10 years would lose its purpose of preparing the local workforce is not addressed. "If we continue to not find other ways to train of our people, future legislatures and governors would again be discussing to extend CW for another 10 years."

"[Beyond 2029], so that we can provide training for our people. In this legislation, it even encourages the three agencies—PSS, NMC, NMTI—to work together for the benefit of our people. Until such time that our agencies leaders can cooperate with one another, we will be forever closing the doors to providing training opportunities for our people in the CNMI."

MINA thanks volunteers of post-Yutu cleanup

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Volunteers remove tin roofing blown to sea by Super Typhoon Yutu near PakPak Beach.

As the 90-day mark approaches since Super Typhoon Yutu struck Saipan and Tinian, Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance would like to recognize all of the dedication and hard work that has gone into the cleanup efforts by the hundreds of volunteers, federal agencies, and non-profit organizations whose members have stepped up as first responders and beyond in assuring that the CNMI's environment returns to a clean and healthy state.

MINA's collection efforts of marine debris in the first four weeks after the storm measured a total of 228 cubic yards of tin that was removed from the lagoon and hauled to the transfer station. This work was done in tandem with the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality as well as with the private sector.

John Stewart, owner of Skydive Saipan LLC, was one of the most active respondents to MINA's call for volunteers, and a special thanks goes out to his crew for their hard work and efforts in MINA's clean-up of the western shoreline, particularly in the San Antonio area.

MINA would like to remind the community to report sightings of tin or other marine debris in the lagoon or near shore by emailing minaoutreach@gmail.com, or by calling 233-7333, and to visit their Facebook page at Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance for images and more information about MINA's programs. ***(PR)***

MINA Rangers and Saipan Sky Team work together in marine debris removal in San Antonio.

More volunteers remove tin roofing.

Son sentenced for killing, dismembering mom in Hawaii

HONOLULU (AP)—A man who admitted to killing and dismembering his mother during an argument in their Honolulu apartment has been sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Yu Wei Gong was charged with murder after he called police in 2017 to turn himself in after a suicide attempt. He admitted killing his mother Liu Yun Gong about six months earlier, according to court documents. When officers asked where his mother was, he said "in the fridge."

An officer searched the freezer and found human remains, including two arms with hands and a decapitated head, in numerous plastic trash bags, court documents said.

Last year, he pleaded guilty to manslaughter, avoiding a life sentence. His defense attorney and the prosecutor in the case said it's a deal the victim's family supports.

Gong, 28, spent most of Monday's sentencing looking down. He spoke quietly as he apologized to his family in China and Hawaii. "I am ashamed for what I did," he said. "I'm sorry, Mom."

AP

Yu Wei Gong, center, appears in court in Honolulu on Monday, Jan. 14, 2019, accompanied by his attorney, Darcia Forester, left, and Mandarin Chinese language interpreter on the right.

Gong feels he doesn't deserve the forgiveness his family has given him, said Darcia Forester, his public defender. "I want to make clear that he did love his mother and she was a very good mother," she said. "Under no circumstances did she deserve what happened."

Judge Paul Wong noted the "obviously sensational facts" in the case, even though there was no mention of the gory details.

Wong sentenced Gong to 20 years for manslaughter and 10 years for identity theft, to be served separately. A one-year sentence for abuse of a corpse is to be served at the same time. Gong will receive credit for time he's already served.

The identity theft charge stems from Gong paying rent with his mom's checking account.

A parole board will determine the minimum number of years Gong must serve. Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Wayne Tashima said his office won't recommend fewer than 20 years.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Chamber to name BPOY on Saturday

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be selecting on Jan. 19 one of eight nominees the 2018 Business Person of the Year at the annual gala at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom.

The nominees are Gloria Cavanaugh of Pacific Islands Club Saipan; John Hirsh of the American Red Cross Northern Mariana Islands Chapter; Nola Hix of Xerox Corp; Glen Hunter of The Shack; James Lee of Marpac, Inc.; Velma Palacios of IT&E; Ron Smith of Angil Design; and Janice Tenorio of IT&E.

Along with "Business Person of the Year," the event will also recognize the "2018 Saipan Young Professional" of the year as well as the Installation of the 2019 board of directors.

Seats to the event are limited and available for advance purchase for $100 per person.

To order tickets, email Mercilynn at administrator@saipanchamber.com, call 234-7150, or visit the third floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe for more information. ***(PR)***

Humanities awards on Jan. 24

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council will be hosting the 21st Governor's Humanities Awards at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant on Thursday, Jan. 24, starting at 11am. ***(PR)***

AMP Visitor Center returns to daily operations

Thanks to a donation by its partner, Pacific Historic Parks, the visitor center and bookstore at the American Memorial Park will return to daily operations, but remain on the current schedule of 9:30am to 4pm.

At the same time, park roads, walking paths, memorials, and tennis courts at the AMP will remain accessible to visitors, but emergency services will be limited.

These adjusted dates and times are subject to change throughout the duration of the federal government shutdown. National Park Service social media and websites are not being monitored or updated and may not reflect current conditions.

Despite the shutdown of the federal government due to the lapse of appropriations, national parks will remain as accessible as possible while still following all applicable laws and procedures. For updates on the shutdown, visit www.doi.gov/shutdown. ***(NPS)***

Lunar New Year party in the CNMI on Feb. 5

To mark the Lunar New Year, the Marianas Visitors Authority and community partners will hold an evening Lunar New Year Party on Feb. 5, 2019.

The evening will include live entertainment and food sales from 6pm to 10pm at Paseo de Marianas pedestrian mall in downtown Garapan.

Entertainment will include performances by the Chinese community, Korean community, the Chamorro community, and other groups.

The pedestrian mall will be decorated with traditional Korea and Chinese lamps. The event is co-organized by the Chinese Association, the Korean Community of Saipan, and the MVA.

For more information, contact the MVA Community Projects Division at communityprojects@mymarianas.com or call 664-3200/1. ***(PR)***

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UOG liberal arts cohort brings Micronesian history to London

Ten scholars of the University of Guam community contributed knowledge on Micronesian and Chamorro history at the Pacific History Association Conference, convened from Dec. 3–5 in London and Cambridge, England. Led by President emeritus Robert A. Underwood, acting associate dean Sharleen Q. Santos-Bamba of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and assistant professor of Political Science Mary T. Cruz, the Guam cohort of administrators, faculty, graduate students, and alumni presented research papers and chaired panel discussions at the event.

"UOG's presence at the Pacific History Association is a testament to the high-quality research that faculty members, graduate students, and alumni engage in and share at an international level," Santos-Bamba said. "Guam scholars are active, elevating scholarship, and expanding professional and higher education networks."

The conference hosted some 250 attendees composed of faculty, administrators, and students of higher education institutions as well as professionals from various government ministries and agencies, museums, and non-government organizations.

The biennial conference traditionally occurs within the Pacific region, most recently hosted by Guam in 2016. This, the 23rd Pacific History Association Conference, commenced in London to coincide with commemorations surrounding the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's historic first voyage into Oceania.

The British Royal Academy set the stage for the opening, with Anne Perez Hattori, a professor of history and Chamorro studies at UOG and also the president of the Pacific History Association, delivering a keynote address that examined the chenchule' system and Chamorro understandings of gifting and giving.

The conference then moved to Cambridge University, where the UOG cohort presented their papers and led panels on Micronesian history.

"The aspiration of presenters is to take the papers to the next level – that being publication, preferably in a peer-reviewed journal," Hattori said.

Presenters received feedback on their presentations from attendees and made plans for future collaborations in research, student experience, and teaching.

"The beauty of the PHA conference is that the organization itself and the representatives are concerned and connected to island nations and communities," Santos-Bamba said. "This is what makes PHA different from other national and international organizations — the focus is on island communities."

Hattori has been president of the association since 2016 and was re-elected at the conference by the Pacific History Association membership to serve a second two-year term.

The next conference will be held in 2020 in Suva, Fiji, hosted by the University of the South Pacific.

"Our footprint is out there in the international community, and we continue to represent our island, region, and the University proudly," Santos-Bamba said.

A Take on Taking: Unwrapping the Complexities of Oceanic Gifting in the Chamoru Context
Anne Perez Hattori
Professor,
University of Guam

UOG PHOTOS

Anne Perez Hattori, professor of history and Chamorro studies at UOG and president of the Pacific History Association, delivers the keynote address at the biennial Pacific History Association Conference in London.

Presentations by the UOG cohort:

■ "A Take on Taking: Unwrapping the Complexities of Oceania Gifting in the Chamorro Context," keynote address by Professor of History and Chamorro Studies Anne Perez Hattori

■ "Guahu Taotao Tano' – Cultural Revival and Revision in the Mariana Islands" by President Emeritus Robert A. Underwood

■ "The Mother's Tongue in Action: Chamorro Women's Roles in Language Preservation" by CLASS Acting Associate Dean Sharleen Q. Santos-Bamba

■ "(En)Gendering Micronesian Pasts: Re-envisioning Gender Histories in the Not-So-Tiny 'Tiny Islands,'" panel chaired by CLASS Acting Associate Dean Sharleen Q. Santos-Bamba and Alumni James Viernes

■ "Malago' yu' na u guaha maga'taotao: (De)gendering heroes and nation-building in Guam" by Assistant Professor of Political Science Mary T. Cruz and Alumna Nicole Cruz

■ "Garrison Folk and Indios Naturales: Bifurcating the 'Hagåtña Narrative' of Chamorro Political and Cultural Continuity in 18th Century Guam" by Associate Professor of History Michael Clement

■ "Slippery: The Elusions/Illusions of Recontextualizing Acts in Micronesia," panel chaired by Professor of English Evelyn R. Flores

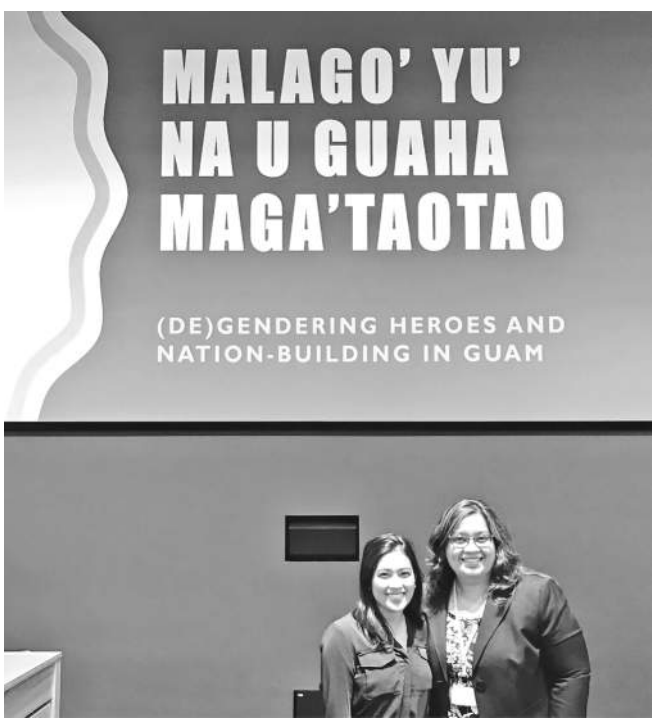
■ "Mothering from Fo'na to Santa Maria: Collectivity and Changing Perspectives across Guam's Literary History" by Women and Gender Studies Instructor Leiana S.A. Naholowa'a

■ "Indigenous Beliefs and Traditional Values Preserved: An Ethnohistorial and Ethnographic Analysis of Guam's Taotaomona Narratives" by Associate Professor of Linguistics Clarisa G. Quan

■ "Dancing Change: The Role of Traditional Yapese Society's Negotiations with the Modern" by English graduate student Elizabeth Rutun

■ "'I Can't Learn that A.B.C.': Chamorro Masculinities and American Education in Guam's First Naval Administration, 1898-1941" by Alumni James Viernes. ***(PR)***

UOG alumni James Viernes; acting associate dean Sharleen Q. Santos-Bamba of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences; professor of History Michael Clement; and L.J. Rayphand and Myjolynne Kim, both Chuukese scholars.



Mary T. Cruz, assistant professor of political science; and alumna Nicole Cruz before their presentation.

From left, alumni James Viernes; Josephine Ong; president emeritus Robert A. Underwood; Kristin Oberiano; and Anne Perez Hattori, professor of history and Chamorro studies at UOG and president of the Pacific History Association. Ong and Oberiano are both students from the U.S. mainland doing research on the history of Filipinos in Guam.

US, Australia kick off 2019 Exercise Sea Dragon

By MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS KEVIN A. FLINN
COMMANDER, TASK FORCE 72 PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—Located at the southernmost point of the Northern Marianas Islands and the United States' westernmost point, Guam serves as the location of 2019 Exercise Sea Dragon, which kicked off Jan. 14.

"Exercise Sea Dragon is an exciting opportunity to enhance maritime patrol relationships in the Western Pacific and focus on building anti-submarine warfare (ASW) proficiency and increase warfighting lethality," said Capt. Brian Erickson, Commander, Task Force (CTF) 72. "In future Sea Dragon exercises, I am excited to expand ally and partner nation participation."

Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise based out of Andersen Air Force Base with this year's event running until Jan. 25. Participating U.S. units will include Patrol Squadron (VP) 47, VP-16, both operating under CTF-72, and Commander, Submarine Squadron (CSS) 15, operating under CTF-74. CTF-72 has taken lead and will oversee the exercise. Units from the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) will join U.S. units throughout the exercise.

"Being a multi-national exercise, our goal is to work closely with our Pacific allies and to continue to foster relationships in the region," said Lt. Cmdr. Korhan Orgun, VP-47's 2019 Exercise Sea Dragon Officer in Charge. "We'll do this through ASW events and learning to work together more efficiently. Additionally, this exercise is a chance for us to further hone our ASW skills and become even more proficient in one of our core missions."

U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS KEVIN A. FLINN

Servicemembers from the United States, Australia and the Republic of Korea pose in formation during a photo exercise at the commencement of Exercise Sea Dragon. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

Four U.S. and one RAAF P-8A Poseidons will be conducting flight operations, with support from a joint Mobile Tactical Operations Center, during the exercise. Respectively, four U.S. aircrews and one RAAF aircrew will be sent with the aircraft. Exercise Sea Dragon stresses coordinated ASW prosecution against both simulated and live targets to include a Los Angeles-class attack submarine assigned to CSS-15.

"By also working with one of our submarines, it provides training for them and helps us prepare for any future engagements," said Orgun. "It's an incredible opportunity for all involved."

Exercise Sea Dragon illustrates that the U.S. and our partners stand ready to ensure the freedom of navigation and the free flow of commerce wherever international law allows. The United States stands firm with allies and looks forward to taking part in forging stronger relations, safeguarding safe and established maritime zones, and ensuring safe sea lanes.

"I have worked very closely with the RAAF P-8s before and even recently during the Rim of the Pacific Exercise," said Orgun. "Our Australian allies have been very professional and skilled at what they do and I look forward to sharing our experiences and learning more from each other."

CTF-72 leads patrol, reconnaissance and surveillance forces in support of U.S. 7th Fleet (C7F), promoting regional security and enhancement of theater security operations through multilateral engagements to build reconnaissance and surveillance capability within C7F and partner forces.

U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS KEVIN A. FLINN

Capt. Brian Erickson, Commander, Task Force 72, right center, poses in formation with Exercise Sea Dragon leadership from the United States, Australia and the Republic of Korea at the commencement of Exercise Sea Dragon. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS KEVIN A. FLINN

Sailors assigned to the "Golden Swordsmen" of Patrol Squadron 47 pose for a group picture following a photo exercise at the commencement of Exercise Sea Dragon. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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AMENDED NOTICE

Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport
"Car Rental Concessions"
CPA-RFP-002-19
Request for Proposals
for:
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-01
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-02
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-03
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-04
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-05
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-06

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of six (6) concessions granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport ("Car Rental Concessions"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport for a period of three years upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-002-19 is **December 05, 2018,** and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:30 p.m. on January, 22 2019**, at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $200.00 (cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

AMENDED NOTICE

Tinian International Airport
"Car Rental Concessions"
CPA-RFP-003-19
Request for Proposals
for:
CPA Concession No. CRT-2018-07
CPA Concession No. CRT-2018-08
CPA Concession No. CRT-2018-09

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of three (3) concessions granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Tinian International Airport ("Car Rental Concessions"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Tinian International Airport for a period of three years upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-003-19 is **December 05, 2018,** and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:30 p.m. on January 22, 2019**, at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $200.00 (cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

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AMENDED NOTICE

Benjamin Taisacan Manglona/Rota International Airport
"Car Rental Concessions"
CPA-RFP-004-19
Request for Proposals
for:
CPA Concession No. CRR-2018-10
CPA Concession No. CRR-2018-11
CPA Concession No. CRR-2018-12

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of three (3) concessions granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona/Rota International Airport ("Car Rental Concessions"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona/Rota International Airport for a period of three years upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-004-19 is **December 05, 2018,** and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:30 p.m. on January 22, 2019**, at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $200.00 (cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Opinion

Hafa Adai
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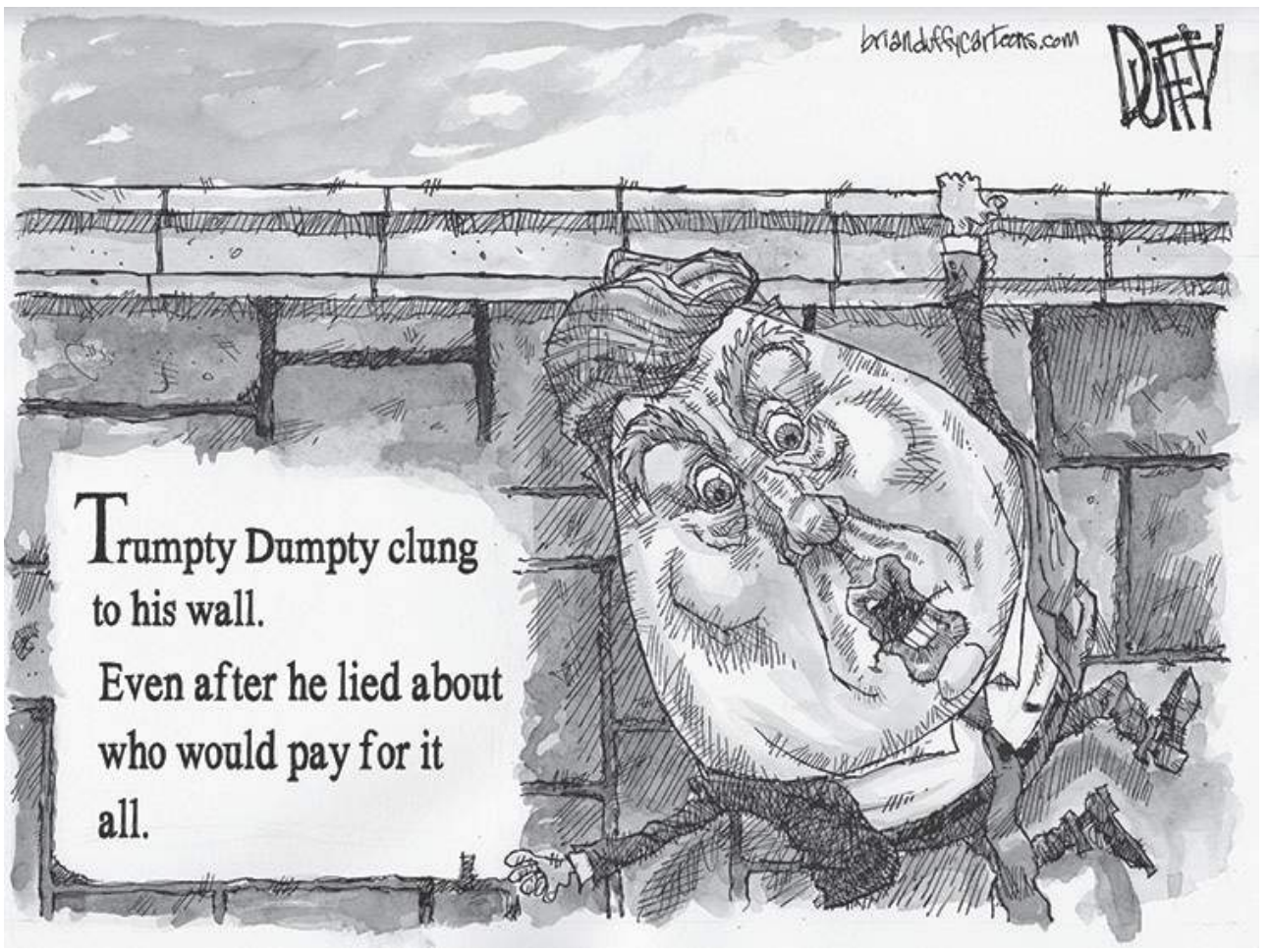

EDITORIAL

Why Trump's pullout from Syria puts America at risk

The pullout of U.S. troops from Syria has begun. How long will it take? What measures will be taken to ensure Islamic State doesn't make a comeback? Will U.S.-allied Syrian Kurdish fighters be safeguarded? No one knows. Clarity isn't defining this process — confusion is.

The Pentagon's announcement of the withdrawal's start comes days after President Donald Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, reassured the West that U.S. troops would not leave Syria until the job is done of finishing off remaining pockets of Islamic State fighters. And not until the U.S. got an assurance from Turkey that it would not unleash an offensive against Syrian Kurdish fighters, the West's best weapon against Islamic State, or ISIS, in Syria.

Bolton's remarks were aimed at tempering Trump's eye-popping declaration made in December that his administration had finished off Islamic State, and that he was ordering the withdrawal of all 2,000 U.S. soldiers from Syria within 30 days. That announcement stunned American allies and many in Washington who know the peril of leaving Syria prematurely.

Exiting Syria rashly, without long-term plans for the region, leaves a Middle East hot spot to two countries long established as hostile to American interests — Russia and Iran. Both Moscow and Tehran are strongly allied with Syria's despotic leader, Bashar Assad. The Kremlin, which for years coveted a foothold in the region to counter U.S. influence there, now has it. For Iran, Syria provides ample space to train and grow Tehran's Shiite foreign fighter network, which it uses in proxy conflicts throughout the Middle East.

Trump's decision also allows America's most nettlesome NATO ally, Turkey, to attack the Syrian Kurdish fighting contingent. Turkey regards Syrian Kurdish forces as terrorists because it sees them as allied with the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which for years has been waging an insurgency against Turkey. But more than any other entity, Syrian Kurdish fighters helped rout Islamic State from its de facto Syrian capital, Raqqa, and shrink the ISIS footprint in Syria. That makes them a force to protect, not abandon.

Trump decided to pull American troops out of Syria after talking on the phone with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. One outcome of that call was an intent to outsource America's fight against the Islamic State to Turkey, the same country bent on annihilating the one fighting force in Syria that did the most damage to Islamic State. As many as 30,000 ISIS fighters may still be at large in Syria and neighboring Iraq. According to the New York Times, Pentagon officials are deeply skeptical that Turkey has the ability or desire to launch counterter-

See WHY on Next Page

Congress ignored its election duties for years. That ends now

House Democrats have waited eight years to regain the speakership, and now that they hold the gavel, they will clearly seek to move on pent-up priorities. For their first act out of the gate, they rolled several into one.

The "For the People Act" — or H.R. 1 — runs just over 500 pages and includes proposals the Democrats have pursued during their time in the minority, such as ethics reforms, campaign finance changes, and a well-publicized section requiring presidential candidates to hand over their tax returns.

But the bill also lays out a vision for election administration in 2020 and beyond, putting the voter at the center of the process instead of focusing on what is easier for government. Congress taking the lead could cause some heartburn at the state level.

Take voter registration. House Democrats went with an all-of-the-above approach to address their focus on expanding access.

They want to see voter registration over the internet, automatic voter registration, and same-day registration. They want better interstate voter matching for more accurate rolls and curbs on some list maintenance activities — items that actually address a key concern among Republicans about election integrity and form the basis for compromise.

Much of America is ahead of Congress. Michigan in 2018 became the latest of 40 states — red, blue, and purple — that allow voters to register online. Automatic voter registration is proliferating across the country, and the most well-known interstate voter registration matching program includes nearly half the states.

Still, a one-size-fits-all solution handed down from the federal government wouldn't sit well with states. Such issues have traditionally received little or no attention from Congress, and it remains the nearly unanimous, bipartisan position of state election officials that election policies are properly decided by the states.

In part, they're right. Not all the states have or want voter-centric election administration. Changes to the system are costly and there are perceptions that certain policies favor one party or the other. Mandating new requirements nationwide wouldn't be as effective as proponents working state-by-state to change voters' minds about election reforms that fit individual state's political cultures.

But good ideas are good ideas, no matter where they come from. For far too long, legislators and election officials have accepted "this is the way it's always been" as policy. Voters are right to demand more, and they have for years.

The commonsense, voter-centric reforms in H.R. 1 could be key components of a modern American election system, even if they involve costs and tradeoffs that deserve input from the states that must implement any federally imposed changes.

By MATTHEW WEIL
CQ-Roll Call

Matthew Weil is the senior associate director of the Democracy Project at the Bipartisan Policy Center.

The Democrats are hardly overstepping the bounds. While the Constitution is clear that the states retain the authority to set the "Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives," it also says Congress may pass laws to govern the process.

Just because past Congresses have ignored that responsibility — leaving the 50 states and Washington, D.C., to create unique procedures for voting — doesn't mean this one should.

Still, things could go wrong if Democrats let politics drown out policy. Each specific election reform issue in H.R. 1 deserves public debate both by Congress and by the state legislatures across the country. Unfortunately, the package of voting reforms was introduced within hours of members taking the oath, with no Republican co-sponsors.

Let's be honest: The Senate is unlikely to take up this legislation in its entirety — which means its value comes mostly as a conversation-starter. This is a chance to begin a national discussion on election administration. It isn't an easy one. Democrats have traditionally focused on expanding access to the voting experience. Republicans have focused on the integrity of the system. They are moving closer together, and efforts such as the bipartisan 2013-2014 Presidential Commission on Election Administration show us that compromise is within reach. The best thing to do now is lower the temperature.

Lowering the temperature doesn't mean sacrificing a robust debate on how to register voters, where and when to cast ballots, and who and how to count the ballots will ensure both access and integrity. House Democrats can do both.

States should not wait a moment longer to implement the reforms that improve the voting experience in the ways that Americans demand. In the meantime, Congress should start talking.

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Why businesses should help furloughed federal workers

By KARA ALAIMO
Bloomberg News

Kara Alaimo is an assistant professor of public relations at Hofstra University and author of "Pitch, Tweet, or Engage on the Street: How to Practice Global Public Relations and Strategic Communication." *She previously served in the Obama administration.*

As the partial government shutdown drags into its fourth week, some of the furloughed workers have been using the hashtag #ShutdownStories on Twitter to share heartbreaking accounts of how losing their pay leaves them unable to pay bills or care for their children. One mom tweeted: "My children don't care about walls. They do care about having a warm house to live in, a car to ride in, clothes to wear, and food in their bellies — none of which is possible if their mom can't go to work.#ShutdownStories"

With no end in sight to the standoff, U.S. businesses have an opportunity to step in and help these families — and garner some great publicity.

JPMorgan Chase has already taken action. The bank is waiving fees for federal workers who stop receiving direct deposits and has urged customers who need help to call a special line to discuss options. Restaurants and bars in the Washington area are offering specials for federal workers, like free sandwiches at Jose Andres restaurants, free pies at pizza shops, and drink specials. Some Washington-area museums are also offering free or reduced admission for employees who are home from work.

As the hardship created by the shutdown intensifies, other businesses should step up. Mortgage lenders and major organizations that rent properties across the country could waive interest and other penalties on late payments by federal workers. Businesses that sell food and other critical items — supermarkets, restaurants, and drug stores — should follow suit with discounts to government employees who might be strapped for cash. Utility companies should do the same.

Child care is another big-ticket expense for many families. Even if parents aren't going to work, most can't stop paying for day care without losing the spots they'll need when they return to their jobs. Although nannies and other independent care givers depend on their salaries to pay their own bills, larger chains of day-care companies and nursery schools should consider offering federal staffers delayed payment options. They could also suspend or reduce their fees for federal workers who decide to keep their kids at home during the shutdown.

Such so-called corporate social responsibility initiatives don't just benefit those in need. They're also good for corporate bottom lines. According to a 2017 study by Cone Communications, 70 percent of Americans believe companies have a duty to get involved in causes, even if they're not relevant to their everyday business. And 89 percent of Americans would change the brands they buy to support a company involved in a good cause, provided it offered similar quality and prices.

At the same time, the study also found that Americans are cynical about corporate efforts to do good, and "won't believe a company is striving to be responsible until they hear information about positive efforts." So, businesses need to make sure their attempts to aid their communities are very visible. The shutdown offers a great opportunity to get a lot of exposure for such initiatives because it's getting so much media coverage.

Getting involved is a great way for businesses and other organizations to position themselves as good citizens. They'll also almost certainly draw positive media attention and social media buzz. Participating businesses also stand to attract new customers, build a lot of loyalty among federal workers, and bolster their reputations in the eyes of other Americans, who appreciate that many government employees already accept lower pay than they might earn in the corporate sector to serve the country. The delayed or reduced earnings businesses would face from such offers could certainly be less than what many major companies spend on glitzy advertising campaigns.

However, businesses should be cautious not to appear mercenary when announcing this outreach. For example, during Hurricane Sandy, American Apparel drew a lot of criticism for offering a 20 percent discount because the retailer was seen as trying to profit from the tragedy. Shutdown specials will work best for businesses that provide goods and services that are truly vital — not luxury items.

The government shutdown is leaving many hardworking Americans who already make sacrifices for their country unable to make ends meet. But there's a real opening for businesses to take action where the government has failed — and earn plaudits and profits in the process.

President Trump's doomsday shutdown

By VIRGINIA HEFFERNAN
Los Angeles Times

Not long after the inauguration of President Donald Trump in 2017, I ran into a discussion of the Doomsday Clock on Facebook.

That year, the clock, that midcentury modernist data-viz illustrating the imminence of global catastrophe, showed 11:57:30 p.m. Two and a half minutes to midnight, two and a half minutes to doom.

This was the closest the world had been to ending, in the opinion of the atomic scientists who keep the clock, since 1953, when the U.S. and the Soviet Union first tested hydrogen bombs. (In 2018, the Doomsday Clock ticked ahead to 11:58. The 2019 Doomsday Clock will be unveiled on Jan. 24.)

Most people discussing the clock on Facebook were, to say the least, concerned. The topic wasn't politics but fear; doom isn't partisan. But one commenter who repped MAGA consoled himself with his own calculus. "Better nuclear winter than more letters in LGBTQ," he wrote.

Suddenly, the whole internet seemed to hold its breath. "I hope it's all you dreamed," I typed in a fury.

I signed off Facebook then, and, soon after, I signed off it for good.

Since that exchange, I've made mental reference many times to the terrifying aphorism of that Facebooker. It was, looking back, scarier than the Doomsday Clock ticking away.

His words laid bare the Death Logic that suffuses the philosophy of Trump and his supporters. The idea is that even the annihilation of humankind is worth it if it owns the libs.

This thinking is now regularly satirized in memes that illustrate how Republicans are cutting off their noses to spite … everything. Throw the nation into massive debt to own the libs. Align with fascism to own the libs. Crash the government to own the libs.

With the Trump-owned government shutdown now the longest in U.S. history, exposing Americans to diverse and serious dangers related to everything from national park sanitation to airport security to food safety, Trump announced Friday he would not "right now" fulfill his cartoonish Boss Hogg threat to declare a national state of emergency, but the government is still closed and he's still waiting for Congress to give him billions for his harebrained steel-slat wall.

No king's dominion for Trump yet, then. Government shutdowns used to be one of the things called a "nuclear option"; a state-of-emergency declaration over a political appropriation disagreement would have to be something beyond nuclear.

But, as the shutdown wears on, political nukes are evidently not enough for Trump. He's mad as heck that the Democratic leadership unmanned him in front of sages like Rush Limbaugh and Ann Coulter. So he's still snorting around looking for something to destroy. California? Better nuclear winter than a minute's success for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

And so later on Friday Trump threatened to loot disaster-relief funds, earmarked for Puerto Rico and Texas, to get his slats. Better to pound hurricane-pounded Americans harder than let Sen. Chuck Schumer do his job.

More Death Logic. We might have predicted that Trump and his Republican henchmen would end up sounding suicidal back in September 2016, when an essay called "The Flight 93 Election" was published. The author was Michael Anton, a men's fashion writer turned far-right gadfly, who until April served as a deputy national security advisor to Trump.

Anton's hair-on-fire essay argued that Republicans needed to give their lives to defeat presidential candidate Hillary Clinton because she, like the terrorists who commandeered United Flight 93 on 9/11, was bent somehow on killing them.

How, when, why? You couldn't tell from Anton's ramblings, but he clearly thought the Clinton reign of terror was related to "censorship practiced by the Davoisie's social media enablers." I guess this means sinister stuff done online by people who attend the World Economic Forum. Better to kamikaze this plane than endure any infringement on Michael Anton's Snapchat freedoms!

This is the logic of suicide (or a school shooter or mass murderer), willing to kill and be killed over something so petty that pettiness is almost the whole point.

And it's a pretty good explanation for why a record-breaking government shutdown has put 380,000 government employees on furlough and made 420,000 work without pay. Trump's shutdown disabling the whole country, sea to shining sea, to save the president's vanity, right? Stealing from the afflicted in Puerto Rico or from flood control efforts in Houston would be worth it too.

In this line of reasoning, as I learned on Facebook two years ago, nuclear annihilation can be just another form of trolling. For the lulz — or however many lulz a human body can muster as it's turned into nuclear soot.

The first time I said it, I was just snapping at a Trumpite troll. But this time I mean it sincerely: About the way you have devastated this country, I hope it's everything you dreamed, Mr. President.

WHY

From Page 10

rorism missions against Islamic State fighters.

No one would argue with Trump's underlying goal to get American troops out of Syria. American forces were sent there to do a job. And when that job is finished, they should come home. That's true for any theater of conflict in any era.

But in Syria, the job isn't finished. Pulling troops out with unjustified haste won't just mean an assignment unfinished. It will embolden hostile countries like Russia, Iran and Assad-controlled Syria, and create space for a potential Islamic State rebirth. It will make the region more dangerous and problematic for the West than it is now. An Islamic terrorist force in ascendance presents a direct threat to Americans and American soil.

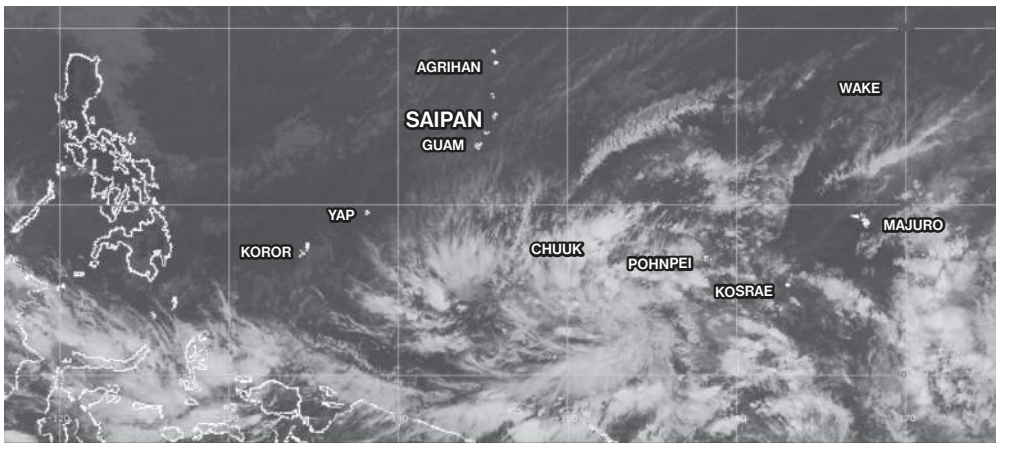
Trump wants the troops to come home. Fine, when the conditions are right. That includes making certain Islamic State is dead and buried.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly sunny and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.
89° 77°	89° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	89° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:56 AM, TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2019
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

There is a piece of a shear line off of Guam early this morning that has triggered showers. The GFS has actually modeled this feature well and has the showers dissipating by afternoon. So, scattered showers were added to the forecast based on radar trends and model information. There could be several rounds of light to moderate showers through the morning across Guam and the coastal waters. Otherwise, no major changes to the forecast. The tropical disturbance that is the remnants of Depression 01W will pass well south of Guam Wednesday night into Thursday. There will most likely be little to no impact from this feature as far as sensible weather goes, except for an increase in clouds. However, some guidance still suggests, that there could be a larger area of rain on the northern side that could bring a better chance of showers Wednesday night or Thursday, mainly to Guam. Guidance also suggests there could be an increased possibility of showers, again mainly for Guam in the convergence behind the system around Friday. Again, not enough confidence to include in the forecast, as much of the guidance keeps the showers to the south, but worth mentioning nevertheless.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	86° / 78°
Palau	Showers	82° / 75°
Yap	Cloudy	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	75° / 64°
Beijing	Sunny	43° / 12°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	64° / 57°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	80° / 72°
London	Partly Cloudy	62° / 51°
Los Angeles	Rain	61° / 56°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	86° / 73°
Melbourne	Cloudy	93° / 73°
Miami	Sunny	73° / 60°
New York	Partly Cloudy	42° / 25°
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	48° / 39°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	46° / 41°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	48° / 34°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	55° / 46°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	60° / 37°
San Francisco	Rain	57° / 52°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	41° / 19°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	50° / 37°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	43° / 29°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:41 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.36
8:40 AM	LOW TIDE	0.93
2:51 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.86
10:16 PM	LOW TIDE	0.14

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:46 AM	6:06 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:07 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:07 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	1:30 AM	1:30 PM
Thursday	-	2:25 AM	2:16 PM
Friday	-	3:22 AM	3:08 PM
Saturday	-	4:23 AM	4:06 PM
Sunday	-	5:26 AM	5:08 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U86486	10:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183 via GUM	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA117/193 GUM-ROR	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
TW9307	9:05pm	:25am+1	4
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Death penalty for Canadian escalates China-Canada tensions

TORONTO (AP)—A Chinese court sentenced a Canadian man to death in a sudden retrial of a drug smuggling case and Beijing said that it has denied a Canadian diplomatic immunity, ratcheting up tensions since Canada's arrest of a top Chinese technology executive last month.

A Chinese court in northeastern Liaoning province announced Monday that it had sentenced Robert Lloyd Schellenberg to death, reversing an earlier 2016 ruling that sentenced him to 15 years in prison.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau strongly condemned Monday's proceeding, suggesting that China was using its judicial system to pressure Canada over the arrest of Meng Wanzhou, chief financial officer of the Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei.

In his strongest comments yet, Trudeau said "all countries around the world" should be concerned that Beijing is acting arbitrarily with its justice system.

"It is of extreme concern to us as a government, as it should be to all our international friends and allies, that China has chosen to begin to arbitrarily apply a death penalty," Trudeau said.

Canada later updated its travel advisory for China urging Canadians to "exercise a high degree of caution due to the risk of arbitrary enforcement of local laws."

AP
In this image taken from a video footage run by China's CCTV, Canadian Robert Lloyd Schellenberg attends his retrial at the Dalian Intermediate People's Court in Dalian, northeastern China's Liaoning province on Monday, Jan. 14, 2019.

Further escalating the diplomatic rift between the two countries, a Chinese spokeswoman said earlier Monday that Michael Kovrig, a former Canadian diplomat taken into custody in apparent retaliation for Meng's arrest, was not eligible for diplomatic immunity as Trudeau has maintained.

A senior Canadian government official said Chinese officials have been questioning Kovrig about his diplomatic work in China, which is a major reason why Trudeau is asserting diplomatic immunity. The official, who was not authorized to comment publicly about the case, spoke on condition of anonymity.

Kovrig, a Northeast Asia analyst for the International Crisis Group think tank, was on a leave of absence from the Canadian government at the time of his arrest last month.

Schellenberg was detained more than four years ago and initially sentenced to 15 years in prison in 2016. But within weeks of Meng's Dec. 1 arrest, an appeals court suddenly reversed that decision, saying the sentence was too lenient, and scheduled Monday's retrial with just four days' notice.

The court gave no indication that the death penalty could be commuted, but observers said Schellenberg's fate is likely to be drawn into diplomatic negotiations over China's demand for the release of Meng.

"Playing hostage politics, China rushes the retrial of a Canadian suspect and sentences him to death in a fairly transparent attempt to pressure Canada to free the Huawei CFO," Human Rights Watch executive director Kenneth Roth said in a tweet.

The Chinese media began publicizing Schellenberg's case after Canada's detention of Meng, the daughter of Huawei's founder, at the request of the United States, which wants her extradited to face charges that she committed fraud by misleading banks about the company's business dealings in Iran.

Days after Meng's arrest, Kovrig and Canadian businessman Michael Spavor were detained on vague national security allegations. Meng is out on bail in Canada awaiting extradition proceedings that begin next month.

Former US Interior boss takes job at investment company

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP)—Former U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said Monday he's "glad to be out of the swamp" after taking a job at a private investment company in the wake of his resignation and amid unresolved ethics investigations into his actions while in President Donald Trump's Cabinet.

North Carolina-based Artillery One said Monday that Zinke had been hired as its managing director to pursue "investing opportunities" in energy, financial technology and cybersecurity. Company chief executive Daniel Cannon declined to identify any of the firm's clients or any investment projects in which it has been involved.

Zinke told The Associated Press he had "joined a winning team" following his previous service as a Navy SEAL, a Republican state lawmaker and Montana's sole member the U.S. House of Representatives. There has been speculation Zinke would run for Montana governor, although he said recently he won't be seeking public office in the next election cycle.

"I am glad to be out of the swamp and free from the chains of office," Zinke said in a text message.

Cannon and Zinke declined to give further details on the terms of his new employment.

After spending almost two years leading an agency that oversees 500 million acres of public lands, Zinke announced his resignation from the Interior Department last month and left the post on Jan. 2. He's denied any wrongdoing amid investigations into his private business dealings, a decision to block a tribal casino and other matters.

Zinke's tenure in President Donald Trump's Cabinet was marked by a shift toward policies more favorable to the oil and gas industry. Artillery One cited his "expertise in the energy and technology sectors" as a reason for his hiring.

Democrats in Congress have said they plan to hold hearings in coming months examining Zinke's time at Interior, including his recommendation to reduce the size of some national monuments.

Artillery One said in its announcement that Zinke would be based in Montana and California but travel extensively abroad and follow President Donald Trump's agenda of promoting economic development.

Zinke officially started with the Highlands, North Carolina, company on Jan. 12, Cannon said in an email.

Company known for deep cost-cutting offers to buy Gannett

NEW YORK (AP)—A hedge fund-backed bid to buy Gannett Co., the publisher of USA Today and several other major dailies, is renewing fears of consolidation and job losses—as well as a decline in the quantity and quality of news coverage—in the already battered newspaper industry.

MNG Enterprises, better known as Digital First Media, offered $1.36 billion on Monday for Gannett, saying in a letter that it can run the company more profitably via tight cost controls and consolidation of operations such as printing and administration.

Gannett said its board will review the proposal.

Investors gave the deal a vote of confidence, immediately pushing Gannett stock up more than 20 percent to almost $12, the amount Digital First is offering.

The proposed deal is the latest indication newspapers aren't done suffering from the punishing effects of the internet. Over the past decade, U.S. papers have struggled as giants like Google and Facebook siphoned off readers and advertising dollars.

Many publications have already made dramatic cuts in their newsroom staffs and scaled back coverage. Even then, acquirers still often swoop in and make even deeper cuts. In July , for example, Tribune Publishing, then known as Tronc, cut half of the New York Daily News' newsroom staff, including the editor in chief.

Digital First has a reputation for especially ruthless cost-cutting.

The takeover bid is "very bad news for anybody who works for a Gannett paper or reads a Gannett paper," said Dan Kennedy, a journalism professor at Northeastern University in Boston. "Gannett is a publicly traded company, of course, and it runs its properties pretty lean, but nevertheless they have a reputation for offering a certain degree of quality."

"Digital First is really the most avaricious of the newspaper chains these days," and is "unique in the degree to which it is willing to cut" costs and jobs, Kennedy said.

Digital First is one of the biggest U.S. newspaper chains, with about 200 papers and other publications, including The Denver Post and the Boston Herald. Its biggest shareholder is Alden Global Capital, a New York hedge fund that invests in distressed companies.

Gannett publishes more than 100 papers around the country, including USA Today; the Detroit Free Press; The Record in New Jersey; The Tennessean in Nashville; the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel; the El Paso Times; The Des Moines Register; and the Arizona Republic.

Overall, estimated U.S. daily newspaper circulation, print and digital combined, fell 11 percent to 31 million in 2017, according to the Pew Research Center. As recently as 2000, weekday subscriptions totaled 55.8 million.

USA Today's daily circulation was 3.1 million in 2017, down from 3.6 million in 2016, a count that includes both print and digital readers.

Gannett has faced declining profits for years. Its annual profit fell 97 percent to $6.9 million between 2013 and 2017, although the company spun off part of its business during that period. In November, it cut its 2018 profit and revenue forecast . Its CEO, Robert Dickey, announced plans to step down by May.

That's despite several years of buying media companies and slashing costs. Gannett has substantially increased its digital ad revenue, and its journalism has won critical acclaim, including three Pulitzer Prizes last year.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
23,909.84	2,582.61	6,905.92
−86.11	−13.65	−65.56
−0.36%	−0.53%	−0.94%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.3866	Hong Kong Dollar	7.8419	Russian Ruble	66.9300
British Pound	0.7756	Indian Rupee	70.2299	Singapore Dollar	1.3524
Canadian Dollar	1.3263	Japanese Yen	108.5140	South Korean Won	1101.64
Chinese Yuan	6.6326	Malaysian Ringgit	4.0528	Swiss Franc	0.9807
Euro	0.8709	New Zealand Dollar	1.4621	Taiwan Dollar	30.2953
		Philippine Peso	51.1277	Thailand Baht	31.8325

Nation

Man who took 2 women hostage at UPS facility is dead

Source: AP
Graphic: Staff, TNS

AP

A New Jersey State Police helicopter arrives on scene as officials respond to reports of an active shooter at a UPS facility Monday, Jan. 14, 2019 in Logan Township, N.J.

LOGAN TOWNSHIP, N.J. (AP)—An armed man who entered a UPS processing facility Monday morning and held two women hostage for several hours was shot and killed by police as he left the building with the women, authorities said.

Several officers fired at William Owens, 39, of Sicklerville, New Jersey, the state Attorney General's Office said in a news release that did not detail the situation or explain why the suspect was shot.

Owens had entered the business at about 8:45 a.m. and fired shots, which did not strike anyone, before taking the women to a room and barricading himself inside with them, authorities said. Officials believe that Owens had a prior relationship with one of the hostages, Gloucester County Prosecutor Charles Fiore said.

The women escaped without serious injuries after the standoff in Logan Township, about 20 miles (30 kilometers) south of Philadelphia, Fiore said.

"Multiple members of law enforcement fired at the man, who was armed with a handgun. He was pronounced dead at the scene," the news release said.

Earlier in the day, Fiore said the suspect had been taken to a hospital after being shot but that his condition was not known.

"I heard one of my fellow employees say, 'Run, he's got a gun,' then I heard the little pop of the gun, I guess, and we all ran and law enforcement took over," employee Allen Anthony Dowling said.

Police evacuated the building and blocked access to the busy industrial park, and nearby schools were put on a modified lockdown.

Hostage negotiators talked to the suspect by phone as he held the women captive. Television news footage showed officers crouched behind a vehicle behind the building's loading dock at the time.

Shortly before noon, as Fiore held a news conference at a township building about 8 miles (12 kilometers) away, a short burst of gunfire was heard at the scene. Fiore later said he didn't know how many shots police fired or whether the gunman fired any shots.

"There was an intervention," FIore said. "He did not surrender."

Police trained in hostage situations, he said, "would make a determination as to whether or not it's appropriate to intervene, using force at any point in time."

Gail Wright, a woman at the scene who described herself as the suspect's cousin, described him as "a good guy."

"He must have felt forced, otherwise, he wouldn't have done this," she said.

In addition to UPS, other major companies including Amazon and U.S. Foods have operations in the area, Mayor Frank Minor said. The township has about 6,500 residents, but some 18,000 people are in the area each workday, he said.

Kidnapping suspect targeted girl after seeing her get on bus

BARRON, Wis. (AP)—A Wisconsin man accused of abducting 13-year-old Jayme Closs and holding her captive for three months made up his mind to take her when he spotted the teenager getting on a school bus near her home, authorities said Monday.

Jake Thomas Patterson, 21, told detectives that "he knew that was the girl he was going to take," and he made two aborted trips to her family's home before finally carrying out an attack in which he fatally shot Jayme's mother in front of her, according to a criminal complaint filed hours before Patterson's first court appearance.

Prosecutors charged him with kidnapping Jayme and killing her parents Oct. 15 near Barron, about 90 miles northeast of Minneapolis. He was also charged with armed robbery.

Investigators believe Patterson hid Jayme in a remote cabin before she escaped on Thursday. Police have said the two did not know each other.

Patterson sat expressionless during the court appearance, which he made via video feed from the county jail. He spoke only to acknowledge that his name and address were correct on paperwork and that he agreed to waive a speedy preliminary hearing. The judge set bail at $5 million.

Patterson went to the home twice intending to kidnap Jayme, but broke off one attempt because too many cars were in the driveway and called off another because the house was too active, the complaint said.

On the night she was abducted, Jayme told police, she was asleep in her room when the family dog started barking. She woke her parents as a car came up the driveway.

She and her mother, Denise, hid in the bathroom, clutching one another in the bathtub with the shower curtain pulled shut. Her father, James, went to the front door. They heard a gunshot, and Jayme knew that James had just been killed, according to the complaint.

Denise Closs started to call 911. Patterson broke down the bathroom door. Jayme said he was dressed in black, wearing a face mask and gloves and carrying a shotgun, the complaint said.

Patterson told her mother to hang up and ordered her to tape Jayme's mouth shut. He told detectives that Denise Closs struggled with the tape so he wrapped the tape himself around Jayme's mouth and head. He then taped her hands behind her back and taped her ankles together before pulling her out of the bathtub and shooting her mother in the head.

He dragged Jayme outside, nearly slipping in blood pooled on the floor. He threw her in the trunk and drove off, pausing to yield to three squad cars speeding toward the house with flashing lights, the complaint said.

Patterson took her to a cabin that he said was his, ordered her into a bedroom and told her to take off her clothes and get dressed in his sister's pajamas. He then threw her clothes into a fireplace in the cabin's basement, according to the complaint.

Whenever he had friends over, he made clear that no one could know she was there or "bad things could happen to her," so she had to hide under the bed. He sealed her under the bed with tote boxes and weights so she could not crawl out, according to the complaint. She had to stay under the bed whenever he left the house, sometimes going for hours without food, water or bathroom breaks.

No. of no-show airport security screeners soars in shutdown

ATLANTA (AP)—The number of airport security screeners failing to show up for work around the country is soaring as the partial government shutdown goes into its fourth week.

No-shows among screeners jumped Sunday and again Monday, when the Transportation Security Administration reported a national absence rate of 7.6 percent compared with 3.2 percent on a comparable day a year ago. Monday marked the first business day after screeners did not receive a paycheck for the first time since the shutdown began.

At Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the world's busiest, some passengers waited more than an hour to get through checkpoints. The airport reported the long lines on its website Monday morning, showing the hour-plus waits at all three checkpoints in the domestic terminal.

"It's chaos out here," passenger Vincent Smith said as he stood in a line that snaked through the Atlanta airport's atrium and baggage claim areas. "This line, I've been here about 15 minutes and it has moved 2 feet."

TSA is working with the Atlanta airport and airlines "to maximize all available operational resources at the airport," TSA spokesman Jim Gregory said.

The agency is working with airports and airlines nationwide to consolidate operations and get the most out of resources, Gregory added. He declined to provide absentee figures for Atlanta or other airports, saying that would compromise security by exposing possible vulnerabilities.

"Screeners will not do anything to compromise or change their security procedures," he said.

But Smith said he could relate to government workers who don't show up so they can find other ways to make ends meet.

"If I was a government worker, yes, I would probably call in and try to do something else because creditors don't care if you're furloughed or not," Smith said. "They just want to get paid and with a family of six, you have to do what you have to."

Atlanta's wait times stretched well beyond what the TSA says most passengers have encountered since the shutdown began.

Delta Air Lines, the dominant carrier in Atlanta, and other airlines said they were advising passengers to get to the airport at least two hours before domestic flights and three hours before international trips. A Delta spokeswoman said airline employees were pitching in by helping manage TSA lines.

TSA said that it screened 1.97 million people on Sunday and that 99.1 percent waited less than 30 minutes, and 93.1 percent less than 15 minutes. Precheck lines for people who pay a fee for expedited screening averaged less than five minutes, TSA said.

A combination of a busy Monday travel day combined with some security lines being closed led to the long lines, airport spokesman Andrew Gobeil said. He said he didn't know how many security lines were down.

A statement from TSA attributed the long waits in Atlanta to "anticipated high volume."

Meanwhile, TSA said it would move officers around the country to deal with local shortages. A few airports are making changes to deal with the shortage of screeners.

Asia

S. Korea defense report doesn't refer to North as enemy

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea stopped calling North Korea an "enemy" in its biennial defense document published Tuesday, an apparent effort to continue reconciliation with Pyongyang.

The development comes as U.S. and North Korean leaders are looking to set up their second summit to defuse an international standoff over the North's nuclear program.

South Korea's defense ministry white paper published and posted on its website doesn't include typical terms labelling North Korea its "enemy, "present enemy" or "main enemy."

The terminologies have been a long-running source of animosity between the Koreas because the North called it a provocation that demonstrated how hostile the South was.

South Korea first called North Korea a "main enemy" in its 1995 document, a year after North Korea threatened to turn Seoul into "sea of fire."

During a previous era of detente in the 2000s South Korea had avoided using the reference, but it revived the "enemy" terminology in its defense document after attacks blamed on North Korea killed 50 South Koreans in 2010.

In the latest defense document, South Korea's military said it considers unspecified "forces which threaten (South Korea)'s sovereignty, territory, citizens and property our enemy."

North Korea's state media hasn't immediately responded.

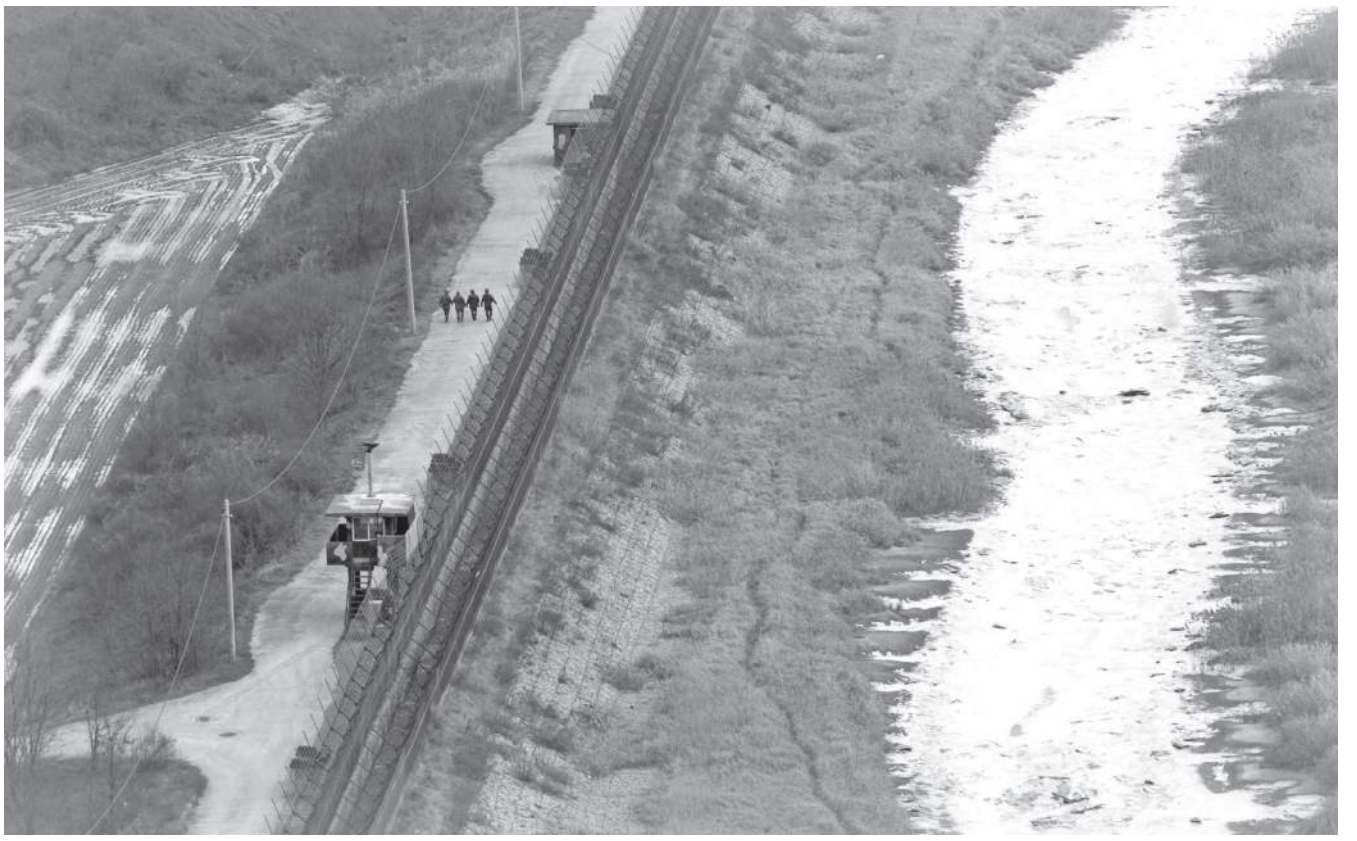
The change in terminology is certain to draw harsh criticism from conservatives in South Korea, who argue liberal President Moon Jae-in's push to engage the North has deeply undermined the country's security posture.

Under tension-easing agreements reached after Moon's summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in September, the two Koreas demolished some of their front-line guard posts, established buffer zones along their frontier and demilitarized their shared border village.

Many conservatives in South Korea have lashed out at the steps, saying South Korea shouldn't have agreed on such conventional arms-reduction programs because North Korea's nuclear threat remains unchanged.

Broader global diplomacy aimed at ridding North Korea of its nuclear weapons hasn't achieved a breakthrough since Kim's summit with President Donald Trump in Singapore last June.

Prospects for a second U.S.-North Korea summit have been boosted after Kim travelled to China last week in what experts say was a trip aimed at coordinating positions ahead of talks with Trump.



AP

South Korean army soldiers patrol along the barbed-wire fence in Paju, South Korea, near the border with North Korea, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Russia tells Japan retaking Pacific islands not on horizon

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia's top diplomat threw cold water Monday on Tokyo's hopes for a quick return of four Pacific islands at the center of territorial dispute, warning Japan it must recognize the islands as part of Russia as a starting point for talks. The stern statement from Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, which followed the talks with his Japanese counterpart Taro Kono, appeared to reflect Moscow's efforts to temper Japanese expectations of an imminent deal on the Kuril Islands dispute. It sets a tough stage for Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's trip to Moscow for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin later this month. Abe has recently voiced hope that this year will mark a breakthrough in solving the dispute and spoke about an imminent change in the islands' status—remarks that angered Moscow. Speaking after the talks, Lavrov said Moscow saw recent statements from Abe as unacceptable. "Russia's sovereignty over the islands isn't subject to discussion. They are part of the territory of the Russian Federation," Lavrov told reporters, noting the U.N. Charter supports Moscow's ownership of them. The Soviet Union took the four southernmost Kuril Islands during the final days of World War II. Japan asserts territorial rights to the islands, which it calls the Northern Territories. The dispute has kept the countries from signing a peace treaty.

Taliban suicide bomber kills 4, wounds over 100 in Kabul

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Afghan officials say at least four people were killed when a Taliban suicide bomber detonated an explosive-laden vehicle in Kabul. Health Ministry spokesman Wahidullah Mayar says 113 were wounded in Monday evening's attack in the capital. The blast occurred near the Green Village compound, home to several international organizations. Roads to the area were still blocked by security forces on Tuesday morning. Interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish said three military personnel and one civilian were killed in the attack, while 12 women and 23 children were among those wounded. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed the attack in a statement.

Suicide bomb attack in Afghanistan kills 4, wounds 90

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—At least four people were killed when a suicide bomber detonated an explosives laden vehicle in the capital Kabul on Monday, according to a security official. Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said that around 90 others were wounded when the explosion took place near the Green Village compound, home to several international organizations as well as non-governmental organizations in Kabul's Police District Nine (PD9). Danish added that three military personnel and one civilian were killed in the attack. Twelve women, 23 children and 55 men were wounded in the evening blast, said Danish. "Dozens of civilian homes were damaged as a result of the strong blast," he added. Health Ministry spokesman Wahidullah Mayar also said that around 90 people, mostly civilians, were wounded and taken to hospitals in the capital.

India's mega Hindu festival begins under cloud of toxic air

PRAYAGRAJ, India (AP)—Thousands of portable toilets line roads constantly swept clean, drinking water flows from newly installed taps, electric substations power a massive tent city and billboards encourage a "clean Kumbh," an extension of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's huge push to improve sanitation across the country.

But the skies over the confluence of sacred rivers in northern India where millions of Hindu priests and pilgrims have come to wash away their sins at the ancient Kumbh Mela festival are thick with toxic dust, a sign that government officials are struggling to grapple with the country's worsening air pollution.

The hazardous air may also hinder the government's drive to make the Kumbh Mela, or pitcher festival, a global tourism event.

Four sites in India rotate every three years hosting the Kumbh, the world's largest pilgrimage. The river baths, prayer, meditation and yoga sessions and other religious rituals are organized by sadhus, Hinduism's holy men, and financially supported with public funds.

Tens of millions throng to the sites for a holy dip, many with little money, few provisions and nowhere to sleep.

The first of a series of royal baths took place before dawn on Tuesday, led by a procession of sadhus on tractor chariots and on foot, singing, drumming and blowing horns. The first to bathe were the naked, naga sadhus, whose bodies were covered with ash. Huge crowds followed them into the river, including Mili Mishra, a teacher from Prayagraj with her husband and two sons.

"We are not earning a livelihood. We think that if we bathe here, God can change our life," she said.

The exact dates and times of the baths, as well as the Kumbh itself, are determined by the cosmic alignment of the sun, moon and Jupiter.

The Indian government has for years provided security and free food and shelter for the poorest pilgrims.

For this year's Kumbh—though less religiously significant than the Kumbh that happens every 12 years, and still less than the one that occurs every 144 years—the government shelled out an estimated 4.3 billion rupees ($650 million), hoping to impress India's largely Hindu population ahead of general elections this year and draw visitors from around the world.

The budget supplied thousands of toilets and urinals, public dormitories, and hundreds of water stations, as well as police, hospitals, 24-hour pharmacies and fire and ambulance services.

And like elsewhere in India, a person's comfort is determined by wealth and social standing.

The expansive campgrounds hosted everything from luxury "glamping" options that cost up to 35,000 rupees ($494) per night—private, tent "suites" with plush bedding and flush toilets—to a cot with a thin foam mattress in a public dormitory in a high-top tent that costs 200 rupees ($2.83) per night.

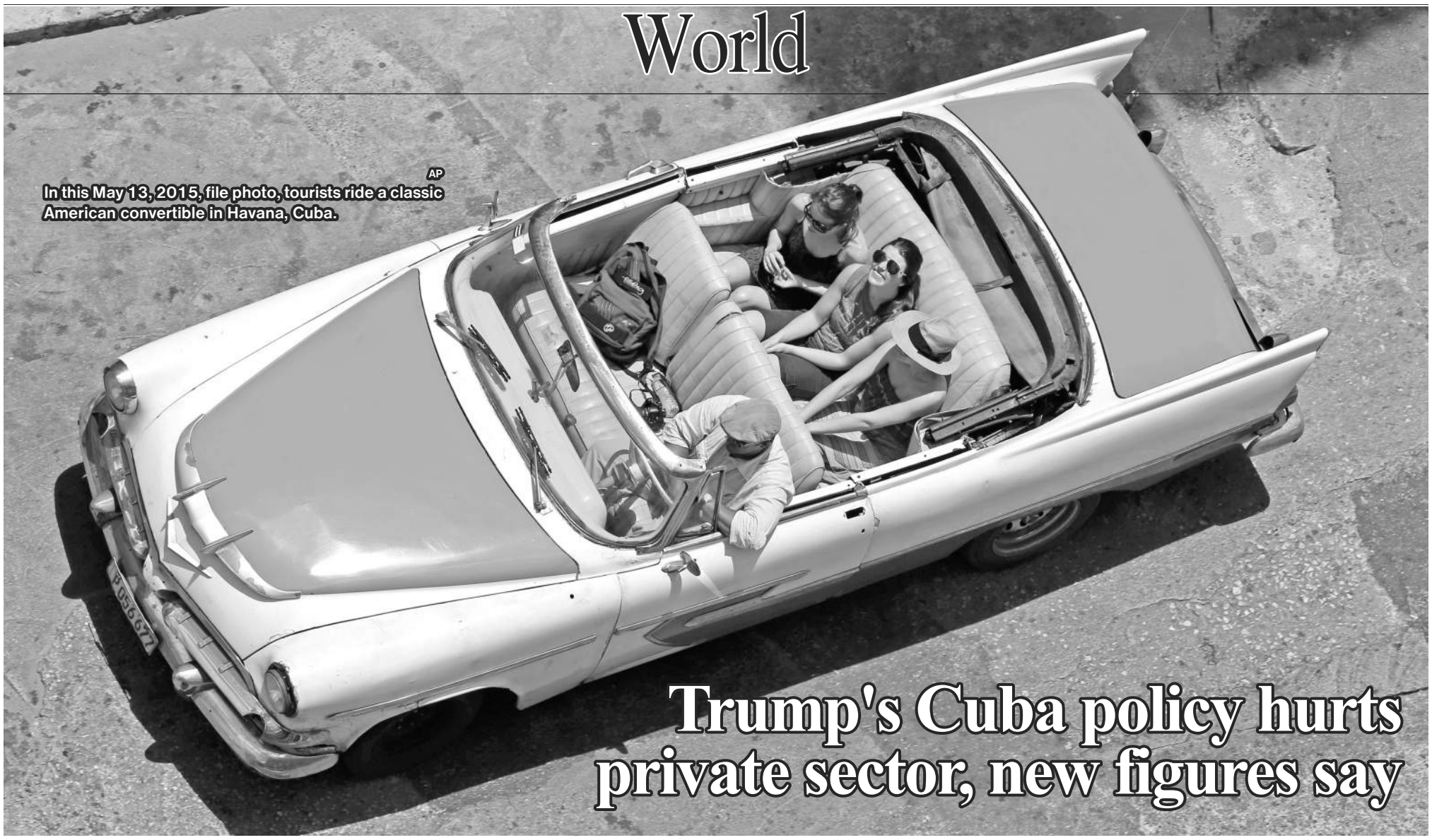
"I go to holy sites very often, but I'm used to them being very dirty. I have never seen this level of cleanliness measures at any other holy city," said Gita Mishra, 58, one of the guests at a public tent near the banks of the river.

When people waiting for a spot outside the tent learned it was full, they laid blankets around the periphery to sleep in the hazy open air.

Still others, including about 500 sanitation workers, pitched pup tents near a row of some of the toilets they are paid 300 rupees ($7) per day to clean.

The production of any Kumbh is a gargantuan task, particularly in the low-lying Indian army parade grounds in Prayagraj where the ritual baths take place. Regular summertime floods leave organizers only 40 to 50 days to erect the temporary city, according to city commissioner Ashish Goel.

World



In this May 13, 2015, file photo, tourists ride a classic American convertible in Havana, Cuba. AP

Trump's Cuba policy hurts private sector, new figures say

HAVANA (AP)—President Donald Trump's Cuba policy is driving hundreds of millions of dollars from the island's private entrepreneurs to its military-controlled tourism sector, the opposite of its supposed goal, new statistics say.

Trump announced in June 2017 that he was tightening limits on U.S. travel to Cuba in order to starve military-linked travel businesses and funnel money directly to the Cuban people.

He restricted Americans' ability to travel to Cuba on their own, rather than with a tour group. At the same time, he allowed U.S. cruise lines to continue to take passengers to Cuba, where they pay millions to disembark at military-run docks and make quick trips onshore that are generally coordinated by government tour agencies that steer travelers to state-run destinations.

Cuban government figures from the first full year under Trump's policy show occupancy of private bed-and-breakfasts in Havana plunged to 44 percent in 2018 after years at near capacity in the wake of President Barack Obama's start of normalization with Cuba, said Michael Bernal, commercial director for the Ministry of Tourism.

Even as the private sector suffered, U.S. travel to Cuba was growing, from 618,000 in 2017 to 630,000 last year, Tourism Ministry figures say. Most of those travelers came by ship, avoiding the confusing rules on travel to the island with package tours that are guaranteed to comply with the law.

The shift to cruises meant the average U.S. stay on the island dropped from six days to three, said Jose Luis Perello, a former University of Havana professor who studies Cuba's tourism industry.

That has had a devastating effect on owners and employees of Cuba's 24,185 private bed-and-breakfasts and 2,170 private restaurants. They cherished U.S. travelers as heavy tippers who crammed days full of activities like classic car rides and cooking classes that put money into private hands.

David Pajon, a university professor who bought an apartment to rent in Old Havana, said he has had to drop his rates 40 percent since Trump's new policy went into effect in 2017. He still was a third empty last month, the first time in three years that he wasn't fully booked in December.

"U.S.-Cuba normalization inspired a lot of people who thought this was a good business to invest their savings in," Pajon said. "And all of a sudden you have the U.S. government creating a situation that has an impact on the number of people who came, or changes the way they're coming — on cruise ships!"

The number of U.S. travelers to Cuba grew from 162,000 in 2015, the year after Obama and then Cuban President Raul Castro announced detente, to 284,000 in 2016 and 618,000 in 2017.

Poles unite in grief over assassination of Gdansk mayor

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—The popular liberal mayor of Poland's port city of Gdansk died Monday after being stabbed at a charity event by an ex-convict with a history of violent crime. The killing plunged the politically divided country into shock and grief and brought Poles into the streets for solemn vigils in a rare show of national unity.

Pawel Adamowicz, 53, died from the wounds inflicted by a 27-year-old man who stormed onstage Sunday evening while the mayor was addressing an audience during the "Lights to Heaven," the finale of a nationwide fundraiser for sick children.

Adamowicz had just expressed gratitude to the "generous" crowd, adding: "This is a wonderful time of sharing good things. You are dear. Gdansk is the most wonderful city in the world. Thank you!"

That's when the assailant rushed up and stabbed him three times, then grabbed a microphone to tell the audience that he acted in revenge against the country's main opposition party, Civic Platform, which Adamowicz was a member of for many years but left it in 2015.

With the music still playing and pyrotechnics erupting onstage, the attacker told the stunned crowd he had been wrongly imprisoned under a Civic Platform-led government.

"I was jailed but innocent. ... Civic Platform tortured me. That's why Adamowicz just died," he said.

Adamowicz was taken to a hospital, where doctors struggled to save him, but a five-hour operation and blood transfusions were not enough, given the gravity of the injuries.

The assassination comes while the nation is torn by bitter political divisions that are similar in many ways to those in the United States.

The right-wing ruling Law and Justice party faced accusations that a hostile atmosphere against Adamowicz and other liberals has created fertile ground for violence.

Government officials pushed back against that accusation, strongly denouncing the attack and stressing the assailant had a history of violent bank robberies.

Identified by authorities only as Stefan W., he was arrested and charged Monday with murder.

Deputy Chief Prosecutor Krzysztof Sierak said there were questions about the mental state of the attacker, who used a 14.5-centimeter (5.5-inch) knife on Adamowicz, and that two psychiatrists will examine him. He had served 5½ years in prison and was released toward the end of last year.

WORLD BRIEFS

France pledges 1B euros in aid to rebuild Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian says France is committing 1 billion euros ($1.15 billion) to help Iraq rebuild after its war against the Islamic State group. Le Drian, meeting with his Iraqi counterpart in Baghdad on Monday, said the aid would go to rebuilding Iraq's most devastated areas. Iraq's Planning Ministry has estimated the cost of reconstruction at $88 billion. Iraq was able to raise $30 billion at a donor conference in Kuwait last year. Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohamed Alhakim thanked France for its assistance to Iraq's minority Yezidi community. Islamic State militants enslaved and killed thousands of Yezidis during their brief reign in north Iraq earlier this decade. France is a member of the international coalition that territorially defeated the group in Iraq and Syria.

Roadside bomb hits police convoy in Egypt's Sinai, kills 1

EL-ARISH, Egypt (AP)—Egyptian security officials say a roadside bomb has hit a police convoy in the north of the Sinai Peninsula, killing a conscript and seriously wounding four others. The officials said the attack Monday took place in the town of Rafah on the Egyptian border with the Gaza Strip. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but the attack bore the hallmarks of the local Islamic State affiliate which spearheads a militant insurgency in northern Sinai. The officials also said that security forces raided early Monday the homes in el-Arish, northern Sinai's largest city, of four members of an IS cell. All four were taken into custody, they said. They said the four were planning attacks.

Senior US official vows to counter Iran on Lebanon visit

CAIRO (AP)—A senior U.S. official says the U.S. will step up efforts to counter Iran's "dangerous activities" around the region including the financing and activities of proxy organizations such as Lebanon's Hezbollah. Referring to the Iran-backed group, U.S. Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale also says it is "unacceptable" to have a militia outside the control of the state and unanswerable to the people of Lebanon digging attack tunnels into Israel and threatening regional stability. A former U.S. ambassador to Lebanon, Hale spoke after meetings with Lebanese officials Monday. He also reiterated that the U.S. will be bringing American troops home from Syria but says America remains committed to ensure the Islamic State group remains unable to remerge.

Focus

END THE
SHUTDOWN
POLAR
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ARE NOT PAWNS IN YOUR CHESS GAME
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ARE NOT PAWNS IN YOUR CHESS GAME

AP

U.S. Sen. Ed Markey, D-Mass., center, speaks during a rally with government workers and their supporters in Boston, Friday, Jan.11, 2019. Markey said President Donald Trump is using federal workers and their families as "pawns" and "hostages" in a political game.

How you (and your finances) can survive the federal shutdown

There's no end in sight to the partial federal shutdown and, more distressing to federal workers, no paycheck in sight either.

The shutdown has furloughed 380,000 federal workers and forced an additional 420,000 to work without pay. President Donald Trump has said he is willing to keep the government closed for months or even years to get his demands met. But even if an agreement is reached and the government reopens, it could be some time before anyone earns a fresh paycheck or gets potential back pay.

It's a burden that few American households can bear without strain. Some experts weigh in with tips on how to cope:

PRIORITIZE YOUR BILLS

Sit down and take a good look at what bills are due, or will be due soon.

Rank your obligations by importance in case you cannot meet them all. Mortgage and utility bills should top the list, followed by credit card payments and any other revolving debt. Consider making just the minimum payments on your credit cards for now. Then look at any other spending to figure out what is essential and what can be trimmed. Limit spending to must-have items only until pay resumes.

CONTACT LENDERS

Contact the lenders for your mortgage, credit cards, auto loans and any other expenses to discuss your options.

The upside is that companies are aware of the situation and a number of them are offering help.

Chase, for one, has been automatically refunding overdraft or monthly service fees for customers who had direct deposit of federal government paychecks to savings and checking accounts since the shutdown began. It also is offering various hardship options for its auto, credit card and mortgage customers. AT&T said that it will waive late fees, provide extensions and otherwise work with customers on flexible payments for phone, internet and television service as long as the shutdown is in effect.

Several large banks, such as Bank of America and Wells Fargo, are also making their hardship programs available to federal workers and others hurt by the shutdown. The terms vary but typically include options for delayed payment, waived fees or loan modifications on various products. Smaller banks are taking steps as well: Oceanfirst Bank in New Jersey said it will grant forbearance or temporarily suspend mortgage payments for up to 90 days for borrowers whose income is affected by the shutdown.

But you must contact the companies to get any sort of assistance.

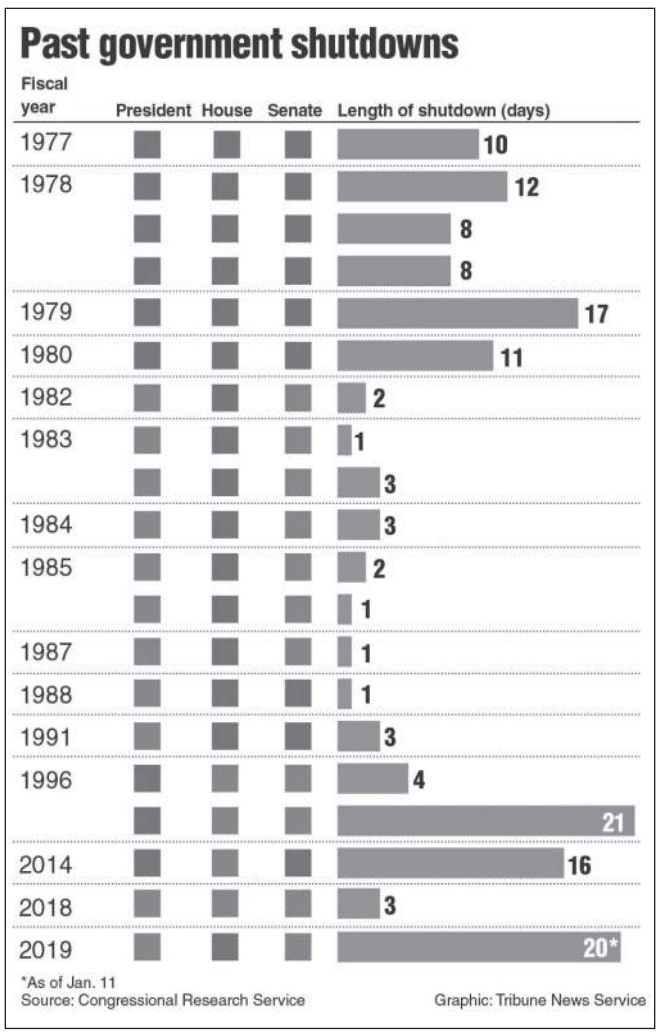
FIND FUNDS

It's time to find some money to tide you over.

Households without emergency savings should consider other sources of cash, such as selling assets, be it stock or unused items around the house. Other options include withdrawals from a Roth IRA, which are tax and penalty free; borrowing from cash value life insurance policies; or tapping a home equity line of credit.

Consider borrowing from family, if it isn't too fraught with complications.

There are decent opportunities to borrow elsewhere as well. Some banks, such as Navy Federal Credit Union are offering certain customers affected by the shutdown a loan of up to $6,000 at 0 percent APR. Others, such as USAA, are offering low-interest loans to certain impacted workers. The American Federation of Teachers, a union that represents a number of federal government employees, is also offering interest-free loans for its impacted members.



Try and avoid riskier sources for money, such as raiding your retirement stash or college savings for the kids; the long-term negatives might not be worth the short-term relief. Avoid title loans or payday lending as the interest rates are exorbitant. While some use of credit cards is understandable, be aware that those balances may become due before your pay resumes.

CONSIDER UNEMPLOYMENT

You may be able to seek unemployment depending on your job and where you live. Unemployment rules are determined by state law, so whether you qualify is based the state you live in, said Tom Spiggle, founder of Spiggle Law Firm in D.C.

A word of warning: You'd be obligated to repay the state for any benefits you received if you are granted unemployment but later receive back pay.

GET A SIDE HUSTLE

Federal workers can find another paying job as long as there is no ethics rule or statute that prohibits it, Spiggle said. Some positions may prohibit you from doing related work but may allow you to do unrelated work.

The U.S. Coast Guard suggested employees hold garage sales or offer to babysit, walk pets or housesit to earn cash—tips that were perceived by many as tone-deaf and were later removed from a support program website. But sadly, it may come to that for many families. The flexibility and cash found through the gig economy may prove essential for some workers.

Barbara O'Neil, a financial planner and professor at Rutgers University, suggests workers should inventory their skill set and think about ways to convert those into an income stream.

However, time may be an issue for those working without pay. Spiggle said there has been some speculation that the TSA agents who called in sick were doing so to work other jobs to make ends meet. He warns that is an improper use of sick leave and could get a worker disciplined or even fired.

SEEK ASSISTANCE

If you find you cannot get by, look into what public assistance is available. Call 211 or visit www.211.org to find out what human services programs are available in your community. Examples include SNAP—the supplemental nutrition assistance program—energy assistance and food pantries. Several food pantries nationwide have made themselves available for those individuals or families at risk of going hungry due to the shutdown.

TALK IT OUT

There is a sense of powerlessness to this situation that is frustrating for workers, said Dennis Nolte, vice president and financial planner at Sea Coast Investment Services in Florida. Workers have "have no earthly idea when they'll be able to go back to work" and are stuck in an odd limbo between employed and unemployed. He recommends talking to friends or relatives or forming a group with coworkers to commiserate about uncertainty to help keep the stress in check. ***(AP)***

Good Housekeeping

Spineless prickly pear offers incredible beauty and texture

By NORMAN WINTER
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

One year after retiring from the University of Georgia's Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens in Savannah I find myself desperately missing cactus. I know what you are thinking if The Garden Guy is writing about cactus, we must get our affairs and lives together as this is a sure sign of the coming apocalypse.

To be honest a hot new vegetable gardening book titled "Grow What You Love" by Emily Murphy got me thinking, not necessarily of vegetables but all things gardening. I use to make fun of people who grew cactus and I feel so ashamed now. No doubt those gardeners were growing what they loved. Now don't get me wrong, my snickering never left the front seat of that car.

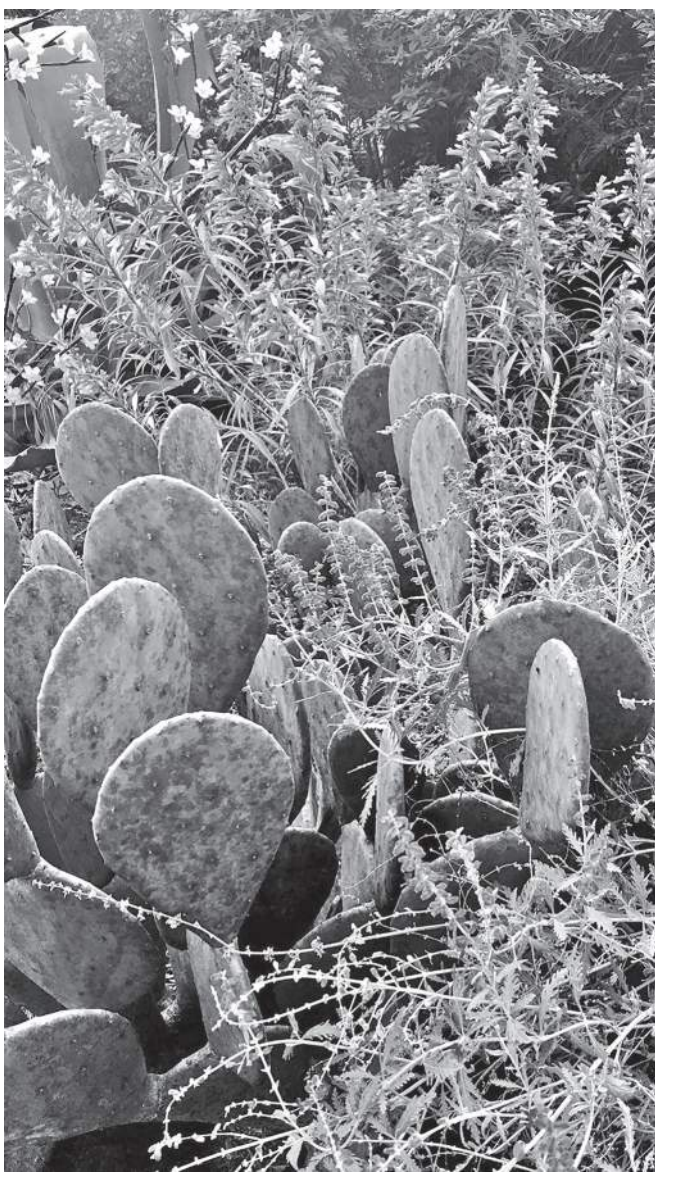
At the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens, we grew thornless prickly pear in our Mediterranean Garden and the new Sun Garden. It offers the landscape an extravaganza of texture with it large pad and subsequent yellow blooms. I've often said all colors look better combined with lime green and in the case of prickly pear the look of every partner seems to be enhanced. It will standout at it reaches 3 to 4 feet in height.

We grew it in combinations with dryland bromeliads like Cherry Coke and Silver Nickle, near by were Soap Aloe and Giant Agave. All combined for an eye candy feast of texture. Then there were the flower partners like Mexican Bush Sage, Candy Corn Cuphea and Ragin Cajun Ruellia all looking quite dazzling and at home with the cactus. One of my favorites was the native Georgia Savory not only blooming but also offering a contrasting finer leaf texture.

TNS
Native Georgia Savory creates a wonderful contrast with the spineless prickly pear.

TNS
Spineless prickly pear is so picturesque with blue agave and Mediterranean fan palms in the background.

Botanically speaking the spineless prickly pear is Opuntia. Like many other plants there seems to small taxonomic skirmish. You'll find Opuntia ellisiana, Opuntia and cacanapa 'Ellisana'. Most agree we can credit the famous horticulturist and breeder Luther Burbank with the creation. Note I said most. Varieties like Gravity, Royal, Prolific and Melrose are his releases.



TNS
Spineless prickly pear creates a sensational texture combined with candy corn cuphea and Mexican bush sage.

Generically speaking however this cactus is cold hardy from zones 6-10. As you might guess plenty of sun and good drainage are pretty much paramount to your success. You easily imagine them being easy to grow in Texas and the West but I assure you in Savannah they were the proverbial 'Piece of Cake'. At Clemson University in South Carolina, Patrick McMillan has created an envious display of Southwestern species to show you their wide range of adaptability.

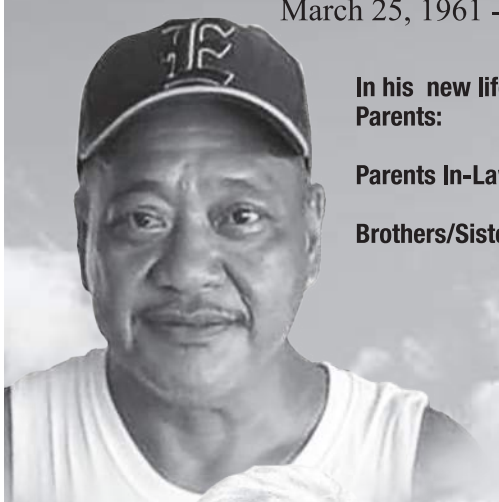
The spineless cactus offers the culinary artist at least three opportunities for the kitchen. The pad of the cactus (nopal) can be used like a vegetable while the petals of flowers incorporated into salads. The one you might be most familiar with however is the pear (tuna) which can be treated like a fruit.

As a young adult on a church outing in New Mexico I tumbled down a hillside coming to rest in a prickly pear. This is an experience that will always be remembered. Growing the spineless prickly pear however will be a most pleasant experience with the ultimate reward being beauty of both flower and texture.

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

†RICHARD HOCOG MARATITA

March 25, 1961 - January 10, 2019



In his new life he now joins his
Parents: †Romano Masga Maratita and †Asuncion Songao Hocog-Maratita
Parents In-Law: †Juan Babauta Camacho & †Maria (Pepero) Rosario Sablan-Camacho
Brothers/Sisters/In-Laws:
†Raimundo H. Manglona,
†Isabelle Manglona,
†Guadalupe Manglona,
†Beato T. & †Carmelita I. Manglona,
†Magdalena M. Inos,
†Clara M. Valdrez,
†Angelica M. Ogo & †Misael H. Hocog,
†Raymond S. Camacho,
†Luis S. & †Linda T. Camacho

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:
Wife: Carmen (Ming) Sablan Camacho Maratita
Children:
Roman John / April (Alvin, Kai'hane, Hailey, and Isaac)
Richard Jr./ Karen (Kyla)
Brothers/ Sisters and In-Laws:
Juan Q. Inos, Bonabae (Benny) H. & Imee E. Maratita, Carmen M. & Akilino A. Suzuki, Delfina M. & Eward C. Barcinas, Nilda C. & Jeoffry Sykes, Eleonita C. Camacho, Jacqueline C. & Ignacio DLG. Aldan, Jesse S. & Lara Camacho

He is additionally survived by numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, god children, cousins and friends.

Daily mass of intention for the repose of his soul is being offered at Santa Soledad (Kagman) Church every evening at 6:00 p.m.

Funeral services will be on Friday, January 18, 2019. His remains will be escorted from CHCC Chapel to Santa Soledad (Kagman) Church at 7:30 a.m. and Responso and Holy Rosary will be recited upon arrival. Eucharistic Celebration will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. followed by Interment Services at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Thank you, Si Yu'us Ma'ase and May God Bless Us All

CARMEN CAMACHO MARATITA AND FAMILY

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW HOME IN PARADISE

Francisco Santos Dela Cruz

[Affectionately known as "Frank" or "Liki"]

March 29, 1962 – January 06, 2019

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." [John 3:16]

Celebrating the spirit of Christmas and the feast of the Three Kings, our Creator shone the bright star of Bethlehem on the path as Frank walked to his new home in Paradise.

In his peaceful and loving spirit, he answered the call and at the pearly gates of heaven, Frank was greeted and reunited with his parents Tomas Castro and Remedio Sablan Santos Dela Cruz; his brother Ignacio "Tex"; his parents-in-law Vicente Muna and Rita Aquiningoc Manglona; his brothers-in-law Herman Heacock, George Aquiningoc Manglona and Julian Aquiningoc Manglona.

Frank lived a very simple, happy, and fulfilling life and was so loved and respected as a husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin, nephew and a friend. He was so giving and caring as a public servant, and as a Legislator, he strongly committed himself to be the voice of the people he served. He unselfishly shared his wealth of intelligence and wisdom in his fervent desire to contribute in improving the lives of those he served, and along the way Frank had, indeed, touched the lives of many.

Frank's loving and peaceful spirit will forever be cherished and kept closely in the hearts of his wife Lisa, their children and their families – Divana M. Dela Cruz and Raymond V. Salas (Raymana); Dana DLC. and Antonio B. Bornilla (Joseph); Deveney M. Dela Cruz and Eric Devin Atalig; and Damien M. Dela Cruz. He will be greatly missed by his siblings and their families – Juan S. and Andresina T. Dela Cruz; Jose S. and Rita S. Dela Cruz; Maria DLC. and Jose Blas; Elizabeth DLC. Heacock; Ramon S. and Josephine S. Dela Cruz; Edward S. and Vivian S. Dela Cruz; his in-laws – Cindy M. and John D. Attao; Norman A. and Katherine D. Manglona; Charlene M. Lizama and Joseph Borja; Patrick A. Manglona and Venus Adtoon; and Lori Manglona Mendiola; his maternal aunt Lourdes S. Waki; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, godchildren, and friends.

Daily masses of intention are offered at 6:00 a.m. at Kristo Rai Church.

Frank will be with us for the last time on Saturday, January 19, 2019. Recitation of the Holy Rosary will be at 7:00 a.m. at the Commonwealth Health Center Chapel. The funeral cortege will proceed to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral at 8:00 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. followed immediately with the Rite of Committal at Mount Carmel Cemetery.

Your presence, thoughts, and prayers are sincerely appreciated.

May God Bless Us All

Lisa Manglona Dela Cruz, Children and Grandchildren

†Children of Tomas Castro & Remedio Santos Dela Cruz and families

Life & Style

AP

Jimmy Fallon greets people in the entrance plaza of the Santurce Fine Arts Center moments before the premiere of the award-winning Broadway musical, Hamilton, starring its creator, New York native of Puerto Rican descent Lin-Manuel Miranda, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Friday Jan. 11, 2019.

Jimmy Fallon: Puerto Rican episode a 'love letter' to island

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jimmy Fallon said a "Tonight Show" episode taped in Puerto Rico with "Hamilton" creator Lin-Manuel Miranda is a love letter to the island still in hurricane-recovery mode.

"It's a real celebration of Puerto Rico," Fallon told The Associated Press of Tuesday's episode of the NBC late-night show. "It's not a pity party, it's a party party."

The show aims to boost tourism and let viewers know about other ways to help in the rebuilding, Fallon said. In return, the host promised, they'll get a "full-on variety show."

"It's one of the best shows, if not the best show, we've ever done. It's amazing," he said.

The inspiration to take New York-based "Tonight" to the island came from Miranda, who is of Puerto Rican heritage and told Fallon last year of his plan to stage an island run of "Hamilton," which opened Friday in San Juan.

Miranda, with a little one-time help from Fallon, performs "The Story of Tonight" number from his Broadway hit on Tuesday's broadcast. Miranda is raising relief money in the U.S. territory for artists and cultural groups that were devastated by 2017′s Hurricane Maria.

Music artists Bad Bunny, Jose Feliciano and Ozuna also are featured, and Fallon showcases island activities and plays foodie with chef-activist Jose Andres, who led a grassroots effort to feed residents of the devastated island.

A music video with Fallon, Bad Bunny and "Tonight" house band The Roots was filmed in San Juan's historic district and includes marching bands and dancers, the host said.

"Tonight" closes with Feliciano and Ozuna singing the beloved Puerto Rican tune "En Mi Viejo San Juan" ("In My Old San Juan").

The show aims to highlight Puerto Rico's culture as well as what it still faces after the disaster, including restoration costs estimated by the government at more than $130 billion.

Fallon said he's been asked by some people why he and "Tonight" took on the complicated, costly episode when he's not from Puerto Rico. He has a ready answer.

"But I'm American, and we've got to step up, we've got to help each other," he said. "That's the message that Lin and Jose are sending through their charities and what they're doing."

The pleased reaction from Puerto Ricans to the show's presence was overwhelming, he told the AP on Monday: "I said 'gracias' so much, my Spanish got much better."

The episode reflects the show's effort to stay fresh, Fallon said.

"We're always changing, always doing something different and always growing. And I think it's good, as my mom would say, to get out of the house" and, for Fallon, hit the road to meet the show's viewers.

While other late-night competitors such as CBS' Stephen Colbert have made today's contentious politics their bread-and-butter and enjoyed ratings boosts, "Tonight" has kept to its course as a mainstream show that reflects Fallon's sunny demeanor. A lively hour with the potential to do good is in his wheelhouse.

During his brief island downtime, Fallon visited one struggling area still facing big challenges, including school closures. It's not part of the episode, but viewers are given information on how they can donate to charities aiding in the island's recovery.

Fallon, taking on the role of Puerto Rico's tourism advocate, also strongly suggests taking an island vacation.

"You can have fun and that would mean just as much as giving. It's a win-win," he said.

R. Kelly accuser says he threatened to reveal her sex life

NEW YORK (AP)—R. Kelly wrote a letter threatening to reveal embarrassing details of a woman's sexual history if she didn't drop a lawsuit accusing him of sexual abuse, the woman and her lawyer said Monday.

In the letter, a person identifying himself as R. Kelly warned a lawyer for the woman, Faith Rodgers, that if she persisted with the suit, she would be "subjected to public opinion."

The letter said the singer would demand medical documentation of her claim that he gave her herpes, force her to turn over texts and social media posts, and have "10 personal male witnesses testifying under oath about her sex life."

"If Ms. Rodgers really cares about her own reputation she should cease her participation and association with the organizers of this negative campaign," the letter said.

A lawyer for R. Kelly in Chicago, Steve Greenberg, denied the letter's authenticity, saying it "looks fake."

"It obviously was not authored or signed by Mr. Kelly, nor sent on his behalf," Greenberg said. "He doesn't write letters."

The letter was sent in October to one of Rodgers' lawyers in New York, a few weeks after the singer was served with the lawsuit accusing him of demeaning her, locking her in rooms and vehicles, and subjecting her to "non-permissive, painful and abusive sex."

Rodgers, 21, said she met Kelly as a 19-year-old after a concert in San Antonio. She participated in the recently aired Lifetime documentary "Surviving R. Kelly," which catalogued years of accusations against the singer.

"We are here today to let Mr. Kelly know in no uncertain terms that he cannot and will not intimidate his alleged victims into keeping silent about their allegations," one of her lawyers, Gloria Allred, said at the news conference Monday.

"No woman should be victim-shamed, harassed or retaliated against because she asserted her rights and spoke her truth," Rodgers added.

The Associated Press does not typically name people alleging sexual abuse unless they come forward publicly, as Rodgers has done.

Kelly has vehemently denied any wrongdoing.

The letter send to Rodgers' New York lawyer, Lydia Hills, also lectured her in sometimes nonsensical terms about her understanding of the law.

"This is to enlighten you concerning the presumption of court appearances that you may not be aware of since attorneys are taught a coloring of law and not Canon or Common Law. Color-of-Law is NOT law. It's fiction for corporate fictions of which I am not."

The letter writer added later that, "I am exempt and not subject to this court so I don't know why you are even addressing me."

Also Monday, the Chicago Tribune published a story detailing court records it obtained on a July lawsuit seeking payment of $174,000 in back rent and other costs for his Chicago recording studio.

The documents include a signed eviction notice, which was put on hold until Jan. 21 for Kelly to pay.

The studio has been the site of recent protests against Kelly, with those involved calling on promoters to stop booking his concerts.

AP

Faith Rodgers, left, appears during a news conference about R&B singer R. Kelly in New York, Monday, Jan. 14, 2019.

Van Morrison sings at friend's funeral in Northern Ireland

LONDON (AP)—Van Morrison has performed one of his best-loved songs at the funeral of his longtime friend, the historian and politician Ian Adamson.

Morrison sang "Into the Mystic"—one of his most mysterious, evocative songs—at Adamson's funeral Monday at Conlig Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland.

The 1970 song was apparently Adamson's favorite.

The funeral was also attended by Irish President Michael Higgins and ex-Formula One racing star Eddie Irvine.

Adamson was a former Lord Mayor of Belfast and the author of a series of books exploring the roots of Northern Ireland's identity.

He died Wednesday at 74.

'So happy.' Chris Pratt engaged to Katherine Schwarzenegger

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A whirlwind romance is leading to an engagement for actor Chris Pratt and Katherine Schwarzenegger.

Pratt posted a photo of his 29-year-old partner sporting an engagement ring on Instagram Monday. He wrote, "Sweet Katherine, so happy you said yes!"

There's no word on when and where the wedding will take place.

Schwarzenegger is the elder daughter of actor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Maria Shriver. She authored the children's book "Maverick and Me" in 2017 and the positive self-image book "Rock What You've Got: Secrets to Loving Your Inner and Outer Beauty from Someone Who's Been There and Back" in 2010.

Pratt, who is 39, got divorced in the fall from actress Anna Faris after nearly nine years of marriage. They share a son, Jack, who was born in August 2012.

AP

This combination of file photos shows Chris Pratt at the MTV Movie and TV Awards on June 16, 2018, in Santa Monica, Calif., left, and Katherine Schwarzenegger at Caruso's Palisades Village opening gala on Sept. 20, 2018, in Los Angeles, right.

Baby boy or girl? It seems Harry and Meghan don't know yet

LONDON (AP)—Prince Harry and his wife Meghan have apparently chosen not to learn the gender of the baby they are expecting this spring.

Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, told schoolchildren during a visit to Birkenhead on Monday that she doesn't know whether she is carrying a boy or a girl.

Kitty Dudley, 9, said after meeting the couple: "I asked her if she was having a girl or a boy and she said she didn't know."

The meeting happened when Meghan talked to a number of children at St. Anne's Catholic Primary School in the town, which is 210 miles (340 kilometers) northwest of London.

Meghan also told one of the children that she is six months pregnant and expects to give birth at the end of April or in early May.

AP

Britain's Prince Harry and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex during a walkabout of Hamilton Square as part of a visit to a new sculpture marking the 100th anniversary of war poet Wilfred Owen's death, in Birkenhead, northwest England, Monday, Jan. 14, 2019.

Screen Actors Guild slams film academy for Oscar tactics

NEW YORK (AP)—The Screen Actors Guild on Monday called on the film academy to stop trying to prevent stars from appearing on award shows before the Oscars.

In an unusually critical statement, SAG-AFTRA said it has received multiple reports that the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is pressuring certain actors to appear only at next month's Academy Awards. Several award shows occur before that, including the guild's own Screen Actors Guild Awards on January 27.

"This self-serving intimidation of SAG-AFTRA members is meant to limit their opportunities to be seen and honor the work of their fellow artists throughout the season. Actors should be free to accept any offer to participate in industry celebrations," SAG-AFTRA said in a statement. "The apparent attempt by the academy to keep our members from presenting on their own awards show is utterly outrageous and unacceptable."

"We call on the academy to cease this inappropriate action," it concluded.

Messages left with the academy were not immediately returned Monday.

Following Kevin Hart's departure, the Academy Awards remain without a host. With less than six weeks to go before the Feb. 24 broadcast, they appear likely to remain that way. To compensate, the film academy has apparently sought to populate the telecast with starry presenters. One reported gambit has been to unite the "Avengers" cast at the Oscars.

Rockstar defends Pinkerton name in 'Red Dead Redemption 2'

NEW YORK (AP)—Rockstar Games is firing back in a legal tussle over the use of a Pinkerton security company's name in its video game "Red Dead Redemption 2."

Pinkerton Consulting & Investigations sent a cease and desist letter to Rockstar and its parent company, Take-Two Interactive, in December, claiming the popular Wild West video game uses their trademarks without permission, according to court documents.

"Red Redemption 2" tells the story of an outlaw gang being pursued by bounty-hunters and mercenaries, including agents of the historic Pinkerton National Detective Agency, the documents said.

The famous detective agency claims the video game "is likely to cause confusion" with their Pinkerton trademark and detective badge and said it was prepared to take legal action if a license agreement was not reached, the documents said.

On Friday, Take-Two Interactive and Rockstar filed a lawsuit in federal court in Manhattan seeking an injunction against Pinkerton and a ruling that the use of the Pinkerton name in the game be covered by the First Amendment.

"Put simply, Defendants cannot use trademark law to own the past and prevent creators from including historical references to Pinkerton agents in depictions of the American West," the lawsuit said.

Teen lets her temper spoil fun with family and friends

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 15-year-old girl. I'm a fun person to be with, and I love spending time with my friends and family. But one thing sometimes ruins it. I have a bit of a temper and some anger problems. I'm wondering if you have anything that could help me control my temper and be nicer to people? I get into disagreements with people I care about because of my attitude. Can you give me some guidance?

TESTY TEEN IN WISCONSIN

DEAR TEEN: If you think you are the only person with anger issues, you are mistaken. We are living in increasingly stressful times that have affected most of us in one way or another.

It takes self-control—and maturity—to react calmly instead of spouting off angrily. Before you can deal with your anger problem you need to be able to pinpoint what makes you lose control. The problem with a hair-trigger temper is that those who fly off the handle sometimes shoot themselves in the foot.

While anger is a normal emotion we all experience at one time or another, most people start learning to control it during childhood. Uncontrolled anger is destructive because it drives others away, making it impossible to maintain healthy, successful relationships. The trick is learning to express anger in constructive rather than destructive ways. My booklet "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It" offers suggestions on how to recognize you are angry before you lose control and how to channel it appropriately. It can be ordered by sending your name and mailing address, plus a check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds), to Dear Abby Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price. I hope it will be helpful for you. It takes maturity to identify and verbalize negative emotions rather than lash out at others. Being able to calmly say, "I'm having a bad day today," or, "When you say (or do) that, it makes me angry" will earn you the respect of others. And it is the key to defusing anger before you lose control.

DEAR ABBY: I just finished building my dream home. My dilemma is, now that I have a wonderful home gym, my in-laws want to use it. I feel selfish saying no. But I'm a very private and somewhat introverted person, and I really like my space. I'm afraid if I agree, it may become inconvenient for me when I want to use it. Where do I draw the line?

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Am I being selfish? If not, how do I refuse without disrupting the family dynamics? I have a feeling it wouldn't sit well, and so far, I've been coming up with excuses to avoid the situation. Please help.

RUNNING OUT OF EXCUSES

DEAR RUNNING OUT: A tactful solution might be to "remind" your in-laws that you want the gym to be available for your private use when you need it, and suggest some hours or days when there wouldn't be a conflict. And hold a good thought. Interest in working out in gyms is notoriously short-lived, so your problem may disappear in quick time.

Pastimes

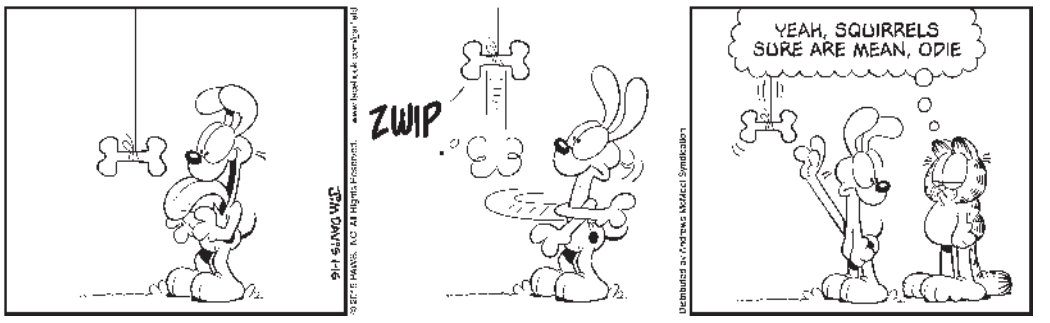
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

SPIFF ESCAPES!
DID CALVIN GET ON THE BUS?
I DIDN'T SEE. ...WHY?
SOMEONE JUST DARTED BEHIND THAT TREE. SEE, THERE HE GOES AGAIN! ISN'T THAT CALVIN?
THE ZOGWARGS HAVE SPOTTED HIM! OUR HERO INFLATES THE EMERGENCY JET PACK HE KEEPS IN HIS POCKET, AND PREPARES FOR TAKEOFF!

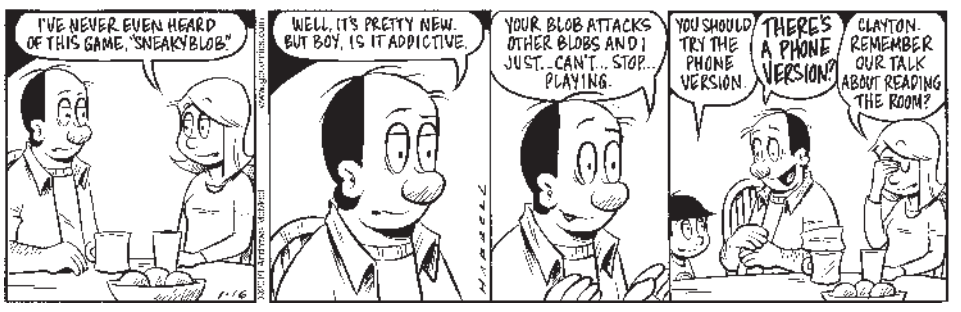
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



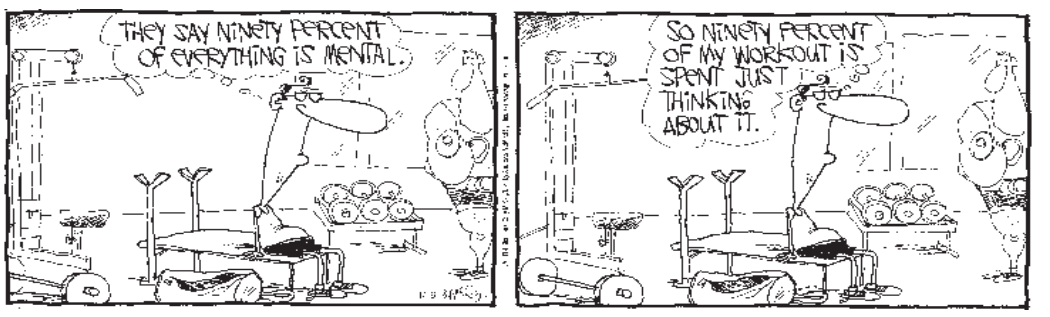
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF THIS GAME, "SNEAKYBLOB."
WELL, IT'S PRETTY NEW. BUT BOY, IS IT ADDICTIVE.
YOUR BLOB ATTACKS OTHER BLOBS AND I JUST...CAN'T...STOP...PLAYING.
YOU SHOULD TRY THE PHONE VERSION.
THERE'S A PHONE VERSION?
CLAYTON. REMEMBER OUR TALK ABOUT READING THE ROOM?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

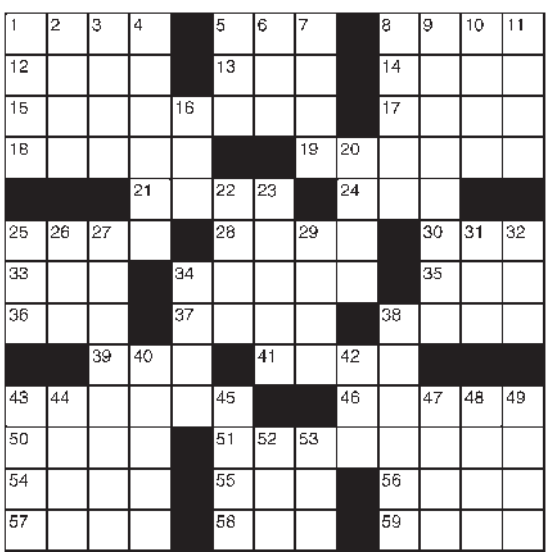
ACROSS
1 Zilch
5 Male swan
8 "Ditto"
12 Mideast airline
13 Glacial
14 "Let's go!"
15 Pattern
17 Help a hood
18 Old photo tint
19 Walks with pride
21 Yuletide tune
24 Archipelago unit (Abbr.)
25 Verifiable
28 Carton sealer
30 Mimic
33 Hostel
34 Goes belly up
35 Water tester
36 "Acid"
37 French 101 verb
38 Quick look
39 Online address
41 Ump's call
43 Steak choices
46 Toy bricks
50 Actor McGregor
51 Intensify
54 Damon of Hollywood
55 Essen exclamation
56 Grand tale
57 On the briny
58 Fish story
59 Take five

DOWN
1 Tennis barriers
2 Sheltered
3 Slightly wet
4 Skiing style
5 Spy org.
6 Hallowe'en mo.
7 Tournament passes
8 Surgery reminders
9 Walk
10 Champagne brand
11 Tolkien creatures
16 Thai language
20 Cravats
22 Coup d' —
23 Hideaways
25 Up to
26 ER workers
27 Move in waves
29 Entreaty
31 "The Raven" writer
32 "A mouse!"
34 Fedora fabric
38 Kitchen gadget
40 Oscar de la —
42 Ga. neighbor
43 Disaster aid org.
44 "As — saying ..."
45 Barking critter
47 Be slack-jawed
48 Elevator name
49 Faction
52 High school subj.
53 "Evita" role

Solution time: 23 mins.

B	A	T	H		G	A	S		Z	A	P	S
A	I	A	I		A	R	P		A	R	F	A
T	A	M	P	A	B	A	Y		G		I	I
			P	M	S		G	Y	R	A	T	F
B	F	B	O	P		C	I	U	F			
E	X	E	S		T	E	A	L	B	L	U	E
A	P	E		T	E	A	S	E		E	N	Y
T	O	P	B	R	A	S	S		W		D	E
			H	O	M	E		Y	I	S	O	H
A	L	L	A	Y	S		H	A	L			
S	U	E	Z		T	W	I	N	B	E	D	S
O	G	E	E		E	A	R		U	R	D	U
F	E	R	N		R	V	E		R	A	S	P

Yesterday's answer 1-16



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kate Moss, 45; Richard T. Jones, 47; Debbie Allen, 69; John Carpenter, 71.

Happy Birthday: Look at the positive in life. Walk with the people who are forward thinkers. Take the time to invest in yourself, your personal surroundings and your involvement in things that matter to you. Dedication and determination will lead to success. Don't live in the past when you should be moving forward. Take control and make things happen. Your numbers are 9, 17, 24, 28, 30, 38, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Take care of business. If you fall short, someone will complain. Channel your energy instead of letting it fuel anger. What you accomplish will make you feel good and prompt you to relax later in the day with someone you love. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Share what's on your mind. Intellectual interaction will be the key to getting things up and running or putting your plans into motion. Being able to give and take will help you reach your goal faster and without complications. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* A relationship will take a turn that will prompt you to do things differently. Make plans that encourage a closer connection to someone you feel is special. Romance is on the rise and will improve your life. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Try something different, but don't make a change for the wrong reason. A realistic approach to partnerships, joint ventures and money matters will deter you from getting involved in something that could lead to financial loss, heartache or injury. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Play time will lift your spirits and help you build enthusiasm to work harder and achieve more. Get physical and join forces with someone who motivates you to be your best. Love is highlighted, and a positive change is heading your way. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Keep your life simple, your emotions under control and your plans doable. Refuse to let anyone upset your world or tempt you to get involved in something that isn't in your best interest emotionally, physically or financially. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Focus on personal and physical changes that will make you feel good about the way you look, who you are and the relationships you want to nurture. Make a point to distance yourself from those who bring you down. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Communication can help solve problems, but arguing will not. Stay calm and address issues intellectually and with facts to avoid being pressured by someone who likes to bait you into a conversation that is upsetting. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Bypass anyone you don't trust. Stick to the people who share common interests and beliefs. Positive changes at home will help you put the past behind you. A professional opportunity that comes your way should be considered. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Share your thoughts with someone you live with or would like to go into partnership with. You may not agree on everything, but with cooperation, you'll come up with a plan that will satisfy the needs of you both. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Don't share your secrets or your plans until you have everything in place. Taking proper steps to protect what you want to do will ensure that no one interferes. Romance is on the rise and will lead to a new opportunity. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Get involved in something that interests you. The people you meet along the way will offer good advice and inside information that will encourage you to make changes to the way you handle your money or pending negotiations. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are friendly, compassionate and helpful. You are fashionable and unique.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			1					
			9	3	8		5	4
5		1				3		2
4		3				2		5
2	8						1	9
	5						4	
		5				4		
		8	5		6	7		
			3	2	7			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

5	1	2	9	4	6	7	3	8
8	4	9	3	7	5	2	1	6
7	3	6	8	1	2	4	5	9
3	8	1	6	2	7	9	4	5
9	6	4	1	5	8	3	7	2
2	5	7	4	3	9	8	6	1
1	2	3	5	9	4	6	8	7
6	9	5	7	8	3	1	2	4
4	7	8	2	6	1	5	9	3

Difficulty Level ★★ 7/15

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

KITTY-CORNER CROSSWALKS Solution: 8 letters

D	P	S	T	A	R	G	E	T	D	S	G	A	A	E
I	O	S	T	R	E	G	N	I	L	T	N	D	R	V
A	S	O	H	R	D	E	P	A	S	S	I	J	R	O
G	I	R	H	O	E	A	U	A	P	T	D	A	A	M
O	T	C	D	R	R	E	F	Q	R	N	L	C	N	O
N	I	A	I	N	O	T	T	D	I	A	I	E	G	T
A	O	E	D	S	O	B	C	E	N	L	U	N	E	O
L	N	P	T	I	Q	R	H	U	T	S	B	T	G	R
E	E	E	P	U	O	U	T	G	T	R	A	O	N	U
A	P	D	L	O	O	V	E	H	I	C	L	E	I	S
S	W	A	I	G	S	R	A	S	O	E	E	Y	K	H
T	E	E	F	U	N	I	K	L	T	W	N	I	I	D
S	N	A	V	I	G	A	T	E	T	S	R	S	H	R
E	A	I	N	T	E	R	S	E	C	T	I	O	N	A
W	L	L	O	R	T	S	B	O	U	N	D	A	R	Y

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Across. Adjacent, Angle, Arrange, Avoid, Between, Boundary, Brisk, Building, Diagonal, Dodge, East, Fast, Feet, Guide, Hiking, Intersection, Lane, Linger, Locate, Motor, Move, Navigate, Neighborhood, North, Oblique, Opposite, Pass, Position, Quests, Rapid, Route, Rush, Shortcut, Skirt, Slant, Sprint, Steps, Street, Stroll, Target, Vehicle, West, Yard

Yesterday's Answer: Sauerkraut

Treasuries 13 through 34 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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Contact No. 235-2567

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Applications must be received by 5:00 pm on Wednesday, January 30th, 2019.

PIC applications are available at the PIC Security Desk by the Loading Dock/Employee Entrance. Incomplete applications will NOT be accepted or considered. PIC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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- Applicant Must
  - o Have excellent written and verbal communications skills.
  - o Have the ability to work independently and be a self-starter.
  - o Be competent with Word, Excel and PowerPoint and with website and social media management and editing.
  - o Be able to organize, compile & interpret data
  - o Have reliable transportation during working hours
  - o Be a US Citizen or Green Card applicant

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San Jose Village
P.O. Box 501127
San Jose, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: (670) 234-7455/234-7427
Facsimile No.: (670) 234-7256

Attorneys for Plaintiff Commonwealth Development Authority.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, Plaintiff, vs THE ESTATE OF HERMAN T. PALACIOS and THE ESTATE OF JOYCELYN C. PALACIOS, Defendants) Civil Action No. 12-0004

NOTICE OF ACTION

The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, hereinafter referred to as auctioneer, and the Development Corporation Division of the Commonwealth Development Authority, hereinafter referred to as CDA, hereby give notice that all of the right, title, and interest of the Defendants The Estate of Herman T. Palacios and The Estate of Joycelyn C. Palacios in the following described, real property situated in San Antonio, Saipan, CNMI will be sold at an auction:

Lot No. 001 I 13, containing an area of 1,529 square meters, more or less, as described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 001 I 00, the original of which was registered with the Land Registry as Document No. 712, on the 1st day of March 1971, including all existing and future improvements on the said property.

The auction sale will be open to the general public and will be held at CDA's Conference Room, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m., on Friday, February 8, 2019**, subject to the following announced terms and conditions:

1. **Minimum Bid. No minimum opening bid.**
2. Reserve. The auction shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auctions with reserve, auctioneer shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction:
   a.) To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
   b.) To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c.) To reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Donnie Militante, Acting Executive Director, Commonwealth Development Authority, P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7145, Fax: 235-7147; or to Rene C. Holmes, P.O. Box 501127, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

5. Deposit; Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, cashier's check or credit card. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

7. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property; contact CDA for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of The Estate of Herman T. Palacios and The Estate of Joycelyn C. Palacios in the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty, and subject to the redemption laws of the CNMI. Failure to inspect the real property or its title will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.

Dated this 10th day of January 2019.

/s/
ROBERT A. GUERRERO, Commissioner
Department of Public Safety

WHATZIT Solution: Childhood sweetheart

VEHICLES FOR BID
"AS IS"

2005 NISSAN ALTIMA
2018 TOYOTA YARIS

Last day for bidding is January 31, 2019 at 3:00PM. For more information, please call Loans Department at 235-6260 ext. 123 or 124. The Bank reserves the right to refuse any and all bids.

VEHICLES FOR SALE
"AS IS"

2016 HYUNDAI ACCENT
2017 TOYOTA TACOMA 4X4

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Bank of Saipan
Marianas Pride

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Patriots primed for rematch with Chiefs

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—New England tight end Rob Gronkowski said the Patriots would take the night to enjoy it. Safety Devin McCourty said it would be closer to just a few hours of celebration.

However long the Patriots players planned to relax after their dominating 41-28 divisional-round win over the Chargers on Sunday, this much is clear: A very good Kansas City Chiefs team is waiting in the AFC championship game.

Meanwhile, in the losing locker room in Foxborough on Sunday, the Chargers headed back across the country after dropping their lone game of the season outside the state of California.

New England needed a field goal from Stephen Gostkowski in the waning seconds to slip past the Chiefs 43-40 in one of the wildest games of the regular season in Week 6. Tom Brady had one of his best games of the season in the Oct. 14 victory over KC, throwing for 340 yards and a touchdown and running for another to earn his 200th career victory as starting quarterback.

All of it was needed on a night in which counterpart Patrick Mahomes rallied his team from a 24-9 halftime deficit, throwing for 352 yards and four touchdowns in what was the Chiefs' first loss of the season and his first as a starting quarterback.

Now comes a rematch against a Kansas City team that oddsmakers have installed as an early favorite. It will be rare air for the Patriots.

Sunday's win over the Chargers sent the Patriots to the conference title game for eighth straight season. It will also be the 13th conference championship game appearance by the Patriots during the Tom Brady-Bill Belichick era.

McCourty said despite their unprecedented run and performance Sunday, nobody in the Patriots locker room believes they can just show up and win at Arrowhead Stadium.

"You go to eight straight AFC championship games, you're in the playoffs 10 years in a row, you kind of get in a mode like it'll keep happening, it'll be there," McCourty said. "But this is a special group, and I think we're starting to realize that we have one opportunity to try to take advantage of everything that's in front of us."

New England got three first-half touchdowns from rookie Sony Michel to set the early tone against the Chargers. He finished with 129 yards rushing, his fifth 100-yard rushing game of the season.

The Patriots scored touchdowns on their first four possessions, building a 35-7 halftime lead.

Buoyed by the run game, Brady was in vintage form at age 41, completing 34 of 44 for 343 yards and a touchdown. He improved to 8-0 as a starter against Philip Rivers, who drops to 1-8 against New England all-time.

Afterward, Brady acknowledged that he heard the voices this season who doubted the Patriots and thought "we can't win any games."

Asked if he thought the win might have quieted those voices, he simply smiled and paused.

"I just like winning," he said. "I just like winning."

The Chargers' final touchdown came long after the game was out of reach, but don't call it garbage time to Antonio Gates.

The Los Angeles tight end is 38 years old, and it might have been his final game. When he caught an 8-yard pass from Rivers to make it 41-28 in the final minute, it made him the oldest tight end in NFL history with a touchdown catch in a playoff game.

Only wide receiver Jerry Rice had a postseason TD reception at a more advanced age.

"Pretty cool that if it were to be his last one, that his last catch was a touchdown," said Rivers, who has thrown 89 regular-season TD passes to Gates, the most for a quarterback-tight end tandem.

AP

In this Jan. 16, 2016, file photo, Kansas City Chiefs free safety Husain Abdullah (39) pushes New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) out of bounds short of the goal line during an NFL divisional playoff football game in Foxborough, Mass.

First-round MLB pick Murray declares for NFL draft

OKLAHOMA—Kyler Murray is keeping his options open for the 2019 NFL draft.

The Oklahoma quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner, who was also the No. 9 overall pick last year by baseball's Oakland Athletics, announced Monday afternoon on Twitter he would be an early entrant into this year's NFL draft.

Monday represented the deadline for underclassmen to make themselves eligible to be taken in April.

The decision, however, does not necessarily indicate that Murray will pursue football rather than baseball. The A's met with him on Sunday.

Murray's next decision point could be in February. The A's open spring training on Feb. 15 in Mesa, Ariz., but the NFL scouting combine will be held from Feb. 26 - March 4 in Indianapolis.

Murray's contract with the A's gave him a $4.66 million signing bonus and afforded him the opportunity to play another year at Oklahoma, during which he led the Sooners to the College Football Playoff semifinals. He threw for 4,361 yards and 42 touchdowns, adding 1,001 yards and 12 touchdowns on the ground.

Should Murray choose football, he'd be required to return the signing bonus to the A's. If he's selected in the first round of the NFL draft, he'd be guaranteed more money in his rookie contract than the $4.66 million he received from Oakland, which is just below the slot value for MLB's No. 9 pick.

However, the A's have been granted the ability to offer Murray a major league contract, which would open new possibilities for a greater payout.

Murray showed off his skills taking batting practice at the Coliseum in an A's uniform back in June, greeted by "WELCOME TO OAKLAND" on the big scoreboard with his photo. Beane joked with super agent Scott Boras —who represents Murray — about the prized prospect committing to 15 years with the A's, who reached the playoffs for the first time since 2014 before losing the AL wild-card game to the Yankees.

Saints sank Rams' perfect record, now LA seeks revenge

LOS ANGELES—Bring on the gumbo.

Sean McVay is taking his team back to the Big (Not So) Easy for the NFC title game, which is just the way it should be for the Los Angeles Rams in trying to earn a ticket to Super Bowl LIII.

Handle the unfinished business or go on home.

All week, the Rams will be reminded of what happened in Week 9 – when their perfect record went up in flames in a 45-35 shootout loss at the raucous Superdome and they couldn't guard Mike (Thomas).

And we can't forget the fire that Rams cornerback Marcus Peters spoke with in defeat. His rough day in man-to-man coverage resulted in Thomas (whose Twitter handle is @Cantguardmike) burning L.A. for 12 catches, 211 yards, a back-breaking 72-yard TD and one in-your-face flip phone celebration.

When someone mentioned after that game how Saints coach Sean Payton crowed about liking the matchup that had Peters assigned to his all-pro receiver, the cornerback promised the Rams would see them again, and he looked forward to chatting with the coach over gumbo.

Now what?

There's seafood gumbo, chicken gumbo, andouille sausage gumbo ...

"It's going to be a great challenge, especially just having to deal with that atmosphere and that environment with those fans going crazy," McVay said during a media conference call.

At least they know what's coming ... and what it would take to silence the place.

McVay didn't specifically address Peters' state of mind. But he talked up the mental toughness his team demonstrated in battling back from a 21-point deficit against the Saints to tie the game at 35 in the fourth quarter, and the response in the ensuing weeks—if not Peters' classic response in the immediate aftermath.

But that was then. Yes, accounting for Thomas will still be an issue, evident with his 12-catch, 171-yard, 1-TD statement against the Eagles in the divisional playoff. But two words may illustrate how different the Rams defense might be this time around: Aqib Talib.

Talib, the veteran cornerback with a Super Bowl ring on his decorated resume, wasn't on the field in early November when Drew Brees blistered the Rams for 346 yards and 4 TDs (zero picks). Now he's back in the flow of Wade Phillips' defense.

"Yeah, it's a big difference," McVay said, alluding to Talib's veteran presence and impact on the secondary's communication.

"When you get your two guys out there on the edges, I think that will enable us to do some different things coverage-wise, be a little more flexible. What a great job Michael Thomas did affecting that (divisional playoff) game ... and he's going to be a big focal point for us to be aware of where he's at."

Last week, the Rams heard so much about a spotty run defense that allowed an NFL-worst 5.1 yards per carry in the regular season, with rushing champ Ezekiel Elliott coming to town. Well, they handled Elliott on Saturday night (47 yards, 2.4 per carry).

"Of course, it was a lot of talk in the media," Talib reflected on Saturday night, "but we just said, 'Man, it's postseason. Nothing else matters but this game.' "

Same deal now. Another one-game season.

Murray out in first round of Australian Open

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—If this was it for Andy Murray, if this truly was it, he gave himself—and an appreciative, raucous crowd that included his mother and brother—quite a gutsy goodbye, the type of never-give-in performance he's famous for.

What Murray could not quite do Monday at the Australian Open was finish off a stirring comeback and prolong what might just be the final tournament of his career.

Playing on a surgically repaired right hip so painful that pulling on socks is a chore, he summoned the strength and strokes to erase a big deficit and force a fifth set before eventually succumbing to 22nd-seeded Roberto Bautista Agut 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (5), 6-7 (4), 6-2, Murray's first opening-round loss at a Grand Slam tournament in 11 years.

"If today was my last match, look, it was a brilliant way to finish," Murray said. "I literally gave everything that I had on the court, fought as best as I could, and performed a lot better than what I should have done with the amount I've been able to practice and train."

Murray, just 31, is a year removed from his operation, and he said that he will decide in the next week or so whether to have a second one. If he opts to avoid another procedure, he might be able to play in July at Wimbledon, where he won two of his three major titles, including the first for a British man in 77 years. If he decides for further surgery, then Monday's match might have been his last.

Even with a hitch in his gait, even as he leaned forward to rest his hands on his knees between points, Murray summoned the strength and the strokes to push the match beyond the 4-hour mark.

And the fans tried to will him past Bautista Agut, who had lost in straight sets all three previous matches the two men had played.

They roared when Murray managed to break back to 2-all on the way to taking the third set, with his mom, Judy, smiling widely as she stood alongside other spectators.

They chanted his name when he grabbed the fourth set.

They rose when the compelling contest ended.

"Andy deserves this atmosphere. Andy deserves (that) all the people came to watch him," Bautista Agut said. "He's a tough, tough fighter. A tough opponent. He gives everything until the last point. I want to congratulate him for all he did for tennis."

Afterward, a video was shown in the stadium with tributes to Murray from various players, including rivals Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic, along with Nick Kyrgios, Caroline Wozniacki, Karolina Pliskova and Sloane Stephens.

"Amazing career. Congratulations, buddy," Federer said. "I'm your biggest fan."

Federer opened his bid for a third consecutive Australian Open championship, and record seventh overall, with a 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Denis Istomin at Rod Laver Arena. Nadal, whose 17 career majors are second among men only to Federer's 20, overpowered Australian wild-card entry James Duckworth 6-4, 6-3, 7-5 earlier.

Nadal, who had surgery on his right ankle in November, hadn't competed since stopping during his U.S. Open semifinal in September because of a bad knee.

"It's very difficult to start (again) after an injury," Nadal said. "I know it very well."

Other major title winners who advanced on Day 1, when the temperature approached 90 degrees (33 Celsius), included defending champion Caroline Wozniacki, Maria Sharapova—who beat Harriet Dart 6-0, 6-0—Angelique Kerber, Sloane Stephens and Petra Kvitova.

The highest-seeded player to exit was No. 9 John Isner, who hit 47 aces but lost 7-6 (4), 7-6 (6), 6-7 (4), 7-6 (5) against 97th-ranked Reilly Opelka in an all-American match.

The most attention, though, was drawn by Murray, who is as popular for his success on the court as his attitude away from it.

The stands were dotted with British and Scottish flags and with signs of support. When Bautista Agut entered, he was greeted by a smattering of polite applause. When Murray was introduced, there were full-throated screams, followed by chants of his first name.

As play began, Murray delighted his well-wishers every so often with terrific shots on a full sprint and his trademark, quick-reflex returns. When he flubbed a shot or otherwise let a point slide by, Murray displayed the muttering and leg-slapping self-contempt the world has come to know and expect—and, let's face it, love—from the guy.

For all that Murray accomplished over the years, including reaching No. 1 in the rankings and a pair of Olympic singles gold medals, he never was able to leave Melbourne with the trophy, finishing as the runner-up five times.

When Murray eventually succumbed to his weariness—not to mention Bautista Agut—the arena speakers blared Queen's "We are the Champions," with its fitting line: "And we'll keep on fighting 'til the end."

If this was, indeed, the end, Murray did just that.

"I'd be OK," he said, "with that being my last match."

AP

Britain's Andy Murray serves in his first round match against Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Monday, Jan. 14, 2019.

Lopsided victory for Serena

This was quite a return for Serena Williams. Almost as if she never left.

In her first match at the Australian Open since winning the 2017 title while pregnant—and her first official match anywhere since a loss in the chaotic U.S. Open final last September—Williams looked to be at her dominant best, overpowering Tatjana Maria 6-0, 6-2.

"I kind of like to jump in the deep end and swim," Williams said in an on-court interview after the 49-minute workout, "and see what happens."

She hadn't dipped her toe in Grand Slam waters since New York, where everything devolved after Williams was warned for getting coaching, then docked a point for breaking a racket and eventually docked a game for calling the chair umpire "a thief" during the final.

When that match was mentioned by a reporter during Williams' news conference Tuesday, as part of a question about whether coaching should be allowed during matches at majors, she replied, "I, like, literally have no comment."

Truth be told, the match against Maria was not much of a test for Williams, given that the 74th-ranked German entered with an 11-15 record in first-round matches at Grand Slam tournaments, only once has made it as far as the third round at any major and owns a total of one career WTA title after a dozen years on the tour.

Williams, meanwhile, is pursuing an eighth title in Melbourne and 24th Slam trophy overall, which would equal Margaret Court—whose career spanned the amateur and professional eras—for the most in tennis history.

"I have been going for the record (for) what seems like forever now," the 37-year-old Williams said, "so it doesn't feel any different."

How lopsided was this?

Williams needed all of 18 minutes to wrap up the first set, ceding just five of 29 points along the way.

The American, a former No. 1 who is seeded 16th on account of playing only 24 matches in 2018, never faced a single break point and compiled a 22-7 edge in winners.

"Maybe," Maria said afterward, "I was a little bit overwhelmed."

Just a little bit.

The two players have homes near each other in a gated community in Florida—"We do sometimes barbecue together," Maria said—and their daughters—Williams' is 16 months old; Maria's is 5 years old—share play dates.

UAE, Thailand advance; Heartbreak for India

AL AIN, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Thailand's decision to change coaches continued to prove to be a masterstroke but there was last-minute heartbreak for India at the Asian Cup on Monday.

Thailand drew against host side United Arab Emirates 1-1 to qualify for the next round for the first time since reaching the semifinals in 1972.

UAE finished top of Group A and the pair could be joined in the round of 16 by Bahrain, which beat India 1-0 thanks to a last-gasp penalty and will likely progress as one of the best four third-placed teams.

It was a far cry from Thailand's first match in the tournament, a 4-1 loss to India that led to the firing of coach Milovan Rajevac and the appointment of his assistant, Sirisak Yodyardthai, as interim coach.

UAE started strongly and took the lead less than seven minutes in. Ismail Al Hammadi's attempted chip came back off the crossbar but Ali Mabkhout headed home the rebound.

Thailand started to get into the match and leveled four minutes before the break when Thitiphan Puangjan took advantage of panic in the UAE defense to bundle the ball past goalkeeper Khalid Eisa.

The War Elephants finished second, a point below UAE and above Bahrain thanks to a better head-to-head record, having won the match between them 1-0.

Bahrain, which hit the woodwork earlier in the match, was seconds away from going out of the tournament as India managed to fend off wave after wave of attack.

However, India captain Pronay Halder brought down Hamed Alshamsan in the penalty area and Jamal Rashed converted in stoppage time to send Bahrain into unbridled joy.

Harden sets record in Rockets win vs Grizzlies

HOUSTON (AP)— After scoring a season-high 57 points in Houston's win over the Memphis Grizzlies on Monday night, James Harden was asked how he was able to put Sunday's loss to Orlando, when he went 1 for 17 from 3-point range, behind him so quickly.

"I went 1 for 17? That's a lot of 3s missed," he deadpanned. "Oh wow!"

Then the reigning MVP, who scored 38 points against the Magic despite that terrible statistic, got serious when asked if it's easy to forget about such a night.

"Yeah, because if I make six of them it's on," he said. "It's a 60-point game. So Orlando got lucky last night."

Harden extended his streak of 30-point games to 17 by halftime, pouring in a franchise-record 36 points in the first half to send Houston on its way to a 112-94 victory. It's the longest such streak since Wilt Chamberlain had 20 straight games of at least 30 points in 1964.

It's the franchise-record 14th time Harden has scored 40 this season and the eighth time in his last 11 games. It's the third time he's topped 50 points this season and the 12th time in his career. He surpassed his previous season best of 54 against Washington and fell just shy of the career-high and club-record 60 points he scored last January against Orlando.

Houston teammate Austin Rivers, who joined the Rockets just three weeks ago, marveled at Harden's ability to not let Sunday's struggles spill over into Monday's performance.

AP

Memphis Grizzlies' Isaiah Hartenstein (55) tries to steal the ball from Houston Rockets' James Harden (13) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Monday, Jan. 14, 2019, in Houston. The Rockets won, 112-94.

"He comes off a game where he was 1 for 17 and everybody's saying whatever and it just doesn't even faze him. He just comes in tonight like he was 17 for 17," Rivers said. "That's just the mindset that the great ones have. I'm telling you right now, if another player went 1 for 17 they would have come in tonight a little ... messed up. James comes in and that's just why he is who he is and it's impressive."

After his huge first half, the Grizzlies double-teamed Harden on most every possession in the first few minutes of the third quarter and he didn't score again until there were about five minutes left in the period. That basket was the start of an 11-0 run capped by a 3-pointer from Harden that pushed the Rockets' lead to 76-60 with about 3 1/2 minutes remaining in the third.

A 3-pointer by JaMychal Green got the Grizzlies within 12 later in the third before Harden scored five quick points to make it 87-70.

Kings 115, Trail Blazers 107

In Sacramento, De'Aaron Fox scored 16 points and made a key 3-pointer with 1:30 remaining as Sacramento beat Portland.

Fox also had nine assists, Buddy Hield scored 19 points and Marvin Bagley III added 13 points and 11 rebounds. The Kings have won three straight and four of five.

Damian Lillard had 35 points to become the fastest player in Portland history to reach 12,000 for his career. Jusuf Nurkic had 13 points and 11 rebounds. CJ McCollum scored six points on 2-of-14 shooting.

The Trail Blazers, playing the second half of a back-to-back, have lost two straight since winning four in a row.

Hornets 108, Spurs 93

In San Antonio, Kemba Walker scored 33 points and Tony Parker enjoyed a triumphant return to San Antonio as Charlotte snapped the Spurs' seven-game home winning streak.

Parker had eight points, four assists and three rebounds in his first game back in San Antonio after signing with the Hornets during the offseason.

Jeremy Lamb added 19 points for Charlotte, which ended a three-game skid. The Hornets also stopped an 11-game slide in San Antonio.

LaMarcus Aldridge led the Spurs with 28 points and 10 rebounds.

The Spurs honored Parker before the game with a two-minute video of his career highlights during 17 seasons in San Antonio, including his four NBA championships with the team. The crowd roared in appreciation, chanting "Tony! Tony! Tony!"

Nets 109, Celtics 102

In New York, D'Angelo Russell scored 18 of his 34 points in the third quarter and Brooklyn ended a 10-game losing streak to Boston, sending the Celtics to a winless three-game road trip.

With Kyrie Irving nursing a bruised right quadriceps, the Nets broke open the game with a 15-0 run in the third and outscored the Celtics 44-21 in the period.

Jarrett Allen added 19 points and 12 rebounds for the Nets, who have won nine of their last 10 home games. Rookie forward Rodions Kurucs also scored 19.

Jayson Tatum had 34 points for the Celtics, who dropped games at Miami and Orlando to start their trip. Jaylen Brown added 22.

Boston also played without Marcus Smart because of an illness.

Jazz 100, Pistons 94

In Salt Lake City, Donovan Mitchell scored 28 points and Rudy Gobert tied a career high with 25 rebounds to propel Utah past Detroit.

Kyle Korver had 19 points, including five 3-pointers, to help the Jazz win for the sixth time in seven games. Gobert finished with 18 points and two blocks. Mitchell has poured in at least 26 points in six consecutive games, the best such stretch of his career.

Utah has won five straight against the Pistons and 22 of 26.

Blake Griffin scored 19 points and Andre Drummond contributed 15 points and 13 rebounds for Detroit, which has lost five of six.

Pelicans 121, Clippers 117

In Los Angeles, Anthony Davis had 46 points and 16 rebounds, Julius Randle added 27 points and New Orleans defeated Los Angeles for just its second road win this season against a Western Conference team.

Davis and Randle combined to score 24 of their team's 28 points in the third quarter, when the Pelicans stretched their lead to 20.

Davis made all 12 of his foul shots in the game, including four in a row to close it out.

The Pelicans improved to 6-17 on the road, including 2-10 versus the West.

Montrezl Harrell led the Clippers with 26 points and 10 rebounds.

White Sox offer less money, less than 8 years to Machado

Despite reports that the White Sox have made an eight-year offer to Manny Machado, their offer to the free agent infielder "was for less than 8 years and less money than has been reported," according to sources.

The financial details of that offer are not completely known, but White Sox have not changed their stance on either money or terms since making their initial offer, thought to be around $200 million.

Although it has often been projected that Machado could sign a contract north of 10 years and $300 million, a 7-year, $200 million offer, for example, would be comparable to the 7-year, $210 million contract Max Scherzer signed with the Washington Nationals in 2015. At $30 million, Scherzer's is the third highest average annual salary in MLB history. The offer to Machado would also come close to the 6-year, $206.5 million contract Zack Greinke signed with the Arizona Diamondbacks in 2016. Greinke's $34.4 million average annual salary is tops in MLB history.

ESPN's Jeff Passan reported that the White Sox upped their offer to eight years and suggested that they might be willing to stretch it to possibly 10 years.

With just over four weeks left until pitchers and catchers report for spring training, and Machado still unsigned, both sides might soon be reaching a breaking point in negotiations.

The White Sox and Phillies are two of the known suitors for Machado. Last week, his camp pushed out the addition of a "mystery team" that was in pursuit of Machado. This is sometimes a sign that the player is close to making a final decision.

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ficials will be staying in hotels.

The organizing committee, headed by Samoa Minister of Education, Sport and Culture Loau Keneti Sio, also named the directors of the various departments that will ensure the success of the Games. Chosen as directors were Samau Etuale Sefo (transport); Klaus Stunzner (brand); Iuli Moefa'auo Salale Moananu (venues); Leasiosiofa'asisina Oscar Malielegaoi (finance); Fuiavailili Egon Keil (security); Taupau Alex Mikaele (sports services manager); and Falefata Hele Matatia (Pacific Games Office).

Besides the designation of the Athletes Village and department heads, the local organizing committee managed to upgrade venues, secure sponsorships, and finalize the sports program, too, before 2019 or a little over seven months before the Games kick off. The quadrennial event will run from July 7 to 20.

The Apia Park Stadium will be the main hub of this year's Pacific Games, as it will host the opening and closing ceremonies, the medal-rich athletics competition, rugby 7s, and rugby 9s. Tennis and beach volleyball will also be held in Apia Park, while basketball (3x3 and 5x5), powerlifting, football, cricket, table tennis, weightlifting, golf, and touch rugby will be played in Faleata.

The CNMI will only compete in weightlifting, tennis, rugby 7s, golf, swimming, athletics, 3x3 basketball, canoe, and badminton. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

SCHORR

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take place at the TrustPower Wilding Park Tennis Centre from Jan. 28 to Feb. 2. The competition in Christchurch is another Grade 4 event and again Schorr is on the main draw of both the singles and doubles matches. Ukraine's Eric Vanshelboim is the top-ranked player in the main draw at No. 58, while four more Top 200 players are also joining the Wilson Tennis event.

For his last tournament in New Zealand, Schorr will be seeing action in a higher level contest—the NZ ITF Summer Championships 2019.

The tournament will be held at the Scarbro Tennis Centre in Auckland from Feb. 5 to 9. It's a Grade 3 event and offers 100 and 75 ranking points to the singles and doubles champions, respectively.

The main and qualifying draws rosters for the NZ ITF Summer Championships have yet to be completed, but world No. 43 Stephan Stricker of Switzerland and Vanshelboim are among the favorites in the singles player. Schorr, as of yesterday, was listed on the alternate list.

The CNMI player was given an opportunity to compete in the New Zealand tournaments after ruling the boys U16 singles event in the 2018 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships held in Fiji. Schorr clinched the division championship after pulling the rug under No. 1 seed Jeremy Guines of Tahiti in the finals, 6-4, 6-3.

LADY

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several players, they took both sets with relative ease.

Meanwhile, two more matches in the girls division were played last Monday.

At the Saipan International School court in As Lito, SIS 1 needed three sets to dispatch SIS 2, 25-8, 22-25, 15-4. Over at the Mt. Carmel School court in Chalan Kanoa, MCS varsity made light work of the school's junior varsity squad, 25-13, 25-13.

The boys division matches also resumed last Monday and results will be reported in *Saipan Tribune*'s Thursday edition along with the title match between GCA 1 and Agape 1 in the middle school division. The finale was played yesterday afternoon.

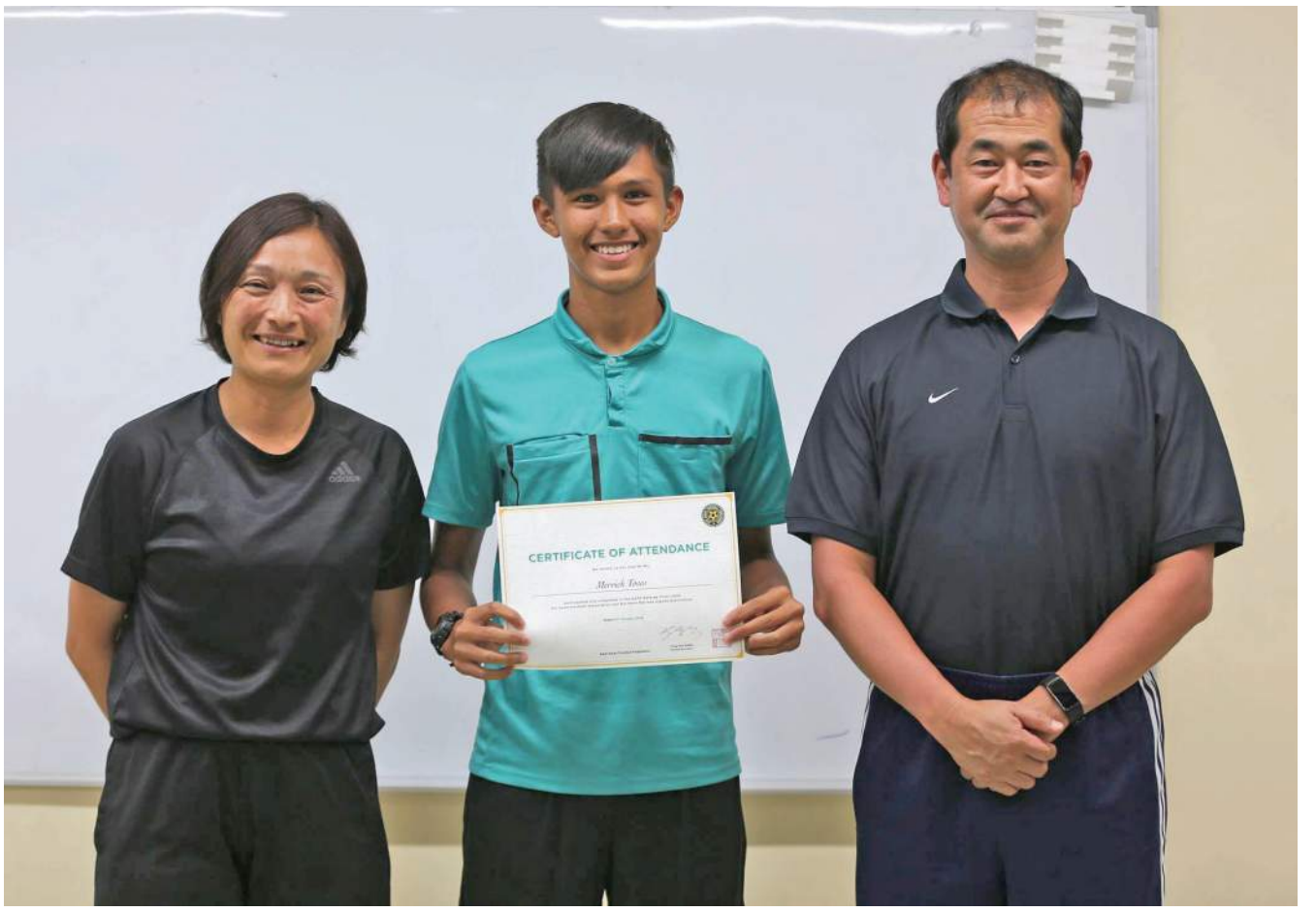
Then for today's games, SIS 2 will be hosting GCA and SIS 1 will be welcoming MCS JV team. In other matches, Agape girls and boys teams will be playing against MCS girls varsity and boys squads at the latter's grass court.

EAFF Referee Development Course Certificate Awarding Ceremony

PHOTOS By: JILL ESPIRITU/GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Jeralyn Castillo, center, poses with her East Asian Football Federation Referee Development Course certificate of attendance during the awards ceremony last week at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Dededo. Five-time AFC Referee of the Year Sachiko Yamagishi and Tadashi Hase of Japan were the instructor and assistant instructor, respectively, of the four-day course.

Katherine Magat joins Sachiko Yamagishi and Tadashi Hase for a photo after the certificate presentation.



Merrick Toves is all smiles after getting his certificate of attendance.

Taka Borja shows his certificate of attendance.

Mia Carreon with her certificate.

Davy Laxa with his certificate of attendance.

Floyd Muna poses for a photo after receiving his certificate of attendance.

Don Cabrera with his certificate of attendance.

Sebastien Manabat shows his certificate of attendance.

Patriots primed for rematch with Chiefs

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Sports

Murray out in first round of Australian Open

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Schorr to play in New Zealand

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior player Robbie Schorr will leave Saipan this morning to compete in three tournaments in New Zealand.

Schorr's first stop will be Wellington for the 2019 Tecnifibre Wellington ITF Juniors that will run from Jan. 21 to 26 at the Renouf Tennis Centre. The event is a Grade 4 tournament, which awards as much as 60 rankings points in singles and 45 in doubles.

"I will try my best to get as many ranking points as I can," said Schorr, who trained four to five times a week to prepare for the series of competitions in New Zealand.

"I played practice matches with Jimin Woo," the 16-year-old said.

The CNMI player is ranked No. 985 in the world, barging into the Top 1,000 at the start of the year after ending the season at No. 1,297.

Schorr will play both in the singles and doubles event in the Wellington tournament and is entered in the main draw of both divisions. The Saipan International School student and Vanuatu's Clement Mainguy are the only Pacific bets seeing action in the six-day event, which has Japan's Taiyo Hirano (world No. 353) as the highest ranked player in the field.

From Wellington, Schorr will head to Christchurch for the 2019 Wilson Tennis Canterbury ITF Juniors that will

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Robbie Schorr will leave Saipan today to compete in New Zealand.

Lady Eagles glide past Torchbearers

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

Grace Christian Academy dismantled Agape Christian School in two sets, as games in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League resumed last Monday after a month-long holiday break.

The Lady Eagles outclassed Agape, showing consistency in both sets for the 25-11, 25-10 victory at the latter's home turf in Middle Road. GCA's Anna Nunez sealed the deal in both sets after calmly delivering the winning serves. Despite leading the Lady Eagles' win, Nunez insisted that her teammates played just as much of a crucial role as she did in the triumph.

"It was a really good feeling to be able to finish the two sets, but all of the team members worked so hard for us to be able to win," Nunez said. "Our teamwork was the key."

In the opening set, Karina Dilse fired away from the server's spot at will for GCA, as she was able to complete 10 consecutive serves against the Lady Torchbearer defense.

Jasmine Phan and Clerisse Dacumos also contributed to the Lady Eagles' cause as they served up a variety of spikes and tips which left their opponents scrambling on defense. Both Phan and Dacumos were reinserted into GCA's lineup after they missed the team's last game in 2018.

"Clerisse and Jasmine are both very talented players, so having them back on the court is very helpful," Nunez said. "When they returned, it's like two family members came back."

During the second and final set, Sunny Woo and Nunez strung together five consecutive serves. With the Lady Eagles getting solid games from

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ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
Grace Christian Academy's Jasmine Phan serves to Agape Christian School during the girls high school division game in the CCOPSA league last Monday at the Agape court in Middle Road.

Pacific Games prep moving forward

The organizing committee of the 2019 Pacific Games reported that significant progress was made as far as preparations for the hosting of the event in Apia, Samoa are concerned.

On top of the list was the designation of the Athletes Village. Majority of the athletes and team officials will be staying at the Methodist Church of Samoa Faleula Compound, which has several big houses that could accommodate the more than 2,000 delegates to the Games. Other of-

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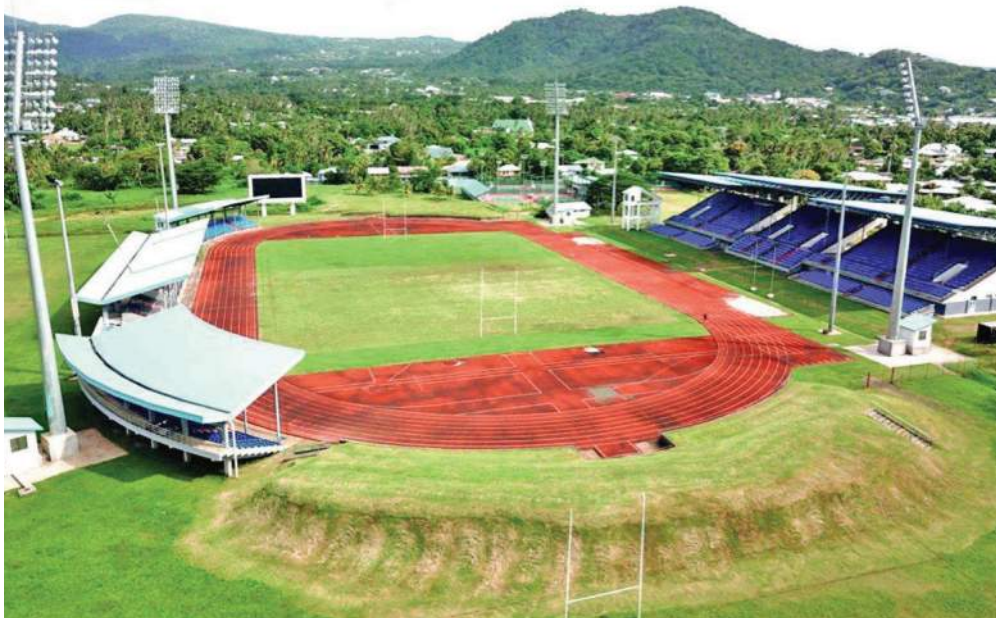

SAMOA PACIFIC GAMES PHOTO
The Apia Park Stadium will be the main hub of the 2019 Pacific Games in Samoa.